



CARIBBEAN
QUARTERLY

VOLUME 2 : NUMBER 1

CARIBBEAN QUARTERLY

	page
EDITORIAL	3
THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE WEST INDIES	
T. W. J. Taylor	4
WEST INDIAN FAMILY ORGANISATION	
Fernando Henriques	16
SHIPS AND SEAMEN IN THE AGE OF DISCOVERY	
John H. Parry	25
NOTES ON THE READING OF POETRY	
A. K. Croston	34
REVIEWS :	
<i>Three Meridians</i>	45
<i>L'Oubli</i>	46
<i>Geology—An Introduction to Earth History</i>	46
A LETTER TO THE EDITOR	47

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Caribbean Quarterly may be obtained from booksellers in the Caribbean area for 30c. or rs. 3d. per copy.

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Editorial

Readers of *Caribbean Quarterly* will notice that for the present issue, in addition to the valuable contribution of Mr. Henriques on "West Indian Family Organisation", we have been fortunate in receiving contributions from the Principal of the University College, and from members of the staff. We welcome Professors Parry and Croston and Mr. Le Page to our columns, and we have reason to believe that in the coming months several more valuable contributions will be received from other staff members.

But readers of *Caribbean Quarterly* must be warned that they cannot rely indefinitely on members of the internal academic staff of the University College to provide articles for the journal of the Extra-Mural Department. The Arts Faculty did not begin teaching until 1950, two years after the first students were received into the Medical Department, thus it is now in the process of being built up. We must expect that within a fairly short time the several departments of the Arts Faculty will be launching their own journals, which will of course, be more specialised than *Caribbean Quarterly*. Members of the staff will be more liable to contribute to the specialised journals than to our columns. It is therefore becoming increasingly necessary that more people who have something worthwhile to say, and a good prose style, should consider writing articles for *Caribbean Quarterly*. We have in mind particularly some of the tutors of Extra-Mural Classes and some of those readers of *Caribbean Quarterly* whose lights remain hidden under various island bushels. In the coming years, we must look forward to having a larger circle of contributors from amongst West Indians and from amongst people in other parts of the world who are interested in the Caribbean and its problems.

The University College of the West Indies

BY PRINCIPAL T. W. J. TAYLOR

THE BRITISH COLONIES in and near the Caribbean Sea lie in the tropical belt, but must not be thought of in the same way as tropical Africa or the eastern tropics. In these there are large indigenous populations with ancient civilizations and cultures or active tribal organisations, while in the Caribbean none of these remain. The original populations disappeared almost entirely in the two centuries that followed Columbus' discoveries and are represented today only by the Mayas and Caribs of British Honduras and the Amerindians of the hinterland of British Guiana while in the islands there are a few negligibly small groups in St. Vincent and Dominica. Historically, the situation is closer to that in the southern states of North America, with settlers and traders from various European countries developing an agriculture based on slave labour imported from Africa. This means that these colonies have been under the influence of some form of European culture for three hundred years or more. Barbados has been continuously British since 1605 and Jamaica since 1655. The two latest to become British Colonies were Trinidad under the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 and British Guiana in 1814: of these the former was Spanish since 1577 and latter Dutch since about 1602. There are no native languages which remain: all the people speak a European tongue, English everywhere with French in Colonies like St. Lucia and Trinidad and Spanish in the latter, though often in a somewhat debased form.

These facts are of importance in thinking of the development of higher education in the Caribbean. If the Colonies had had more in the way of accessible natural resources in addition to their agriculture, there is a good chance that they would now have flourishing university institutions founded in the eighteenth century: it is worth remembering that when Benjamin Franklin was trying to establish a medical school in Philadelphia, the first contribution he received came from Jamaica. Codrington College in Barbados was indeed founded in 1710, but was little more than a grammar school until it was reorganized by Bishop Coleridge in 1834. Its buildings, begun in 1716, have the true academic flavour of the older universities. It was affiliated with the University of Durham in 1875 and is still at work. Its main activities have been in theology and the classics and wherever one travels in the Eastern Caribbean one meets faithful sons of Codrington, clergymen, schoolmasters, lawyers and others who owe to it the positions they now hold. The number of its students has never been large and its endowments are modest so that it has never attempted to provide for the whole of the British Caribbean. There is plenty of valuable work for it in the future and it should always be honoured as the first academic institution in the area.

A more daring proposal of the eighteenth century may be mentioned in passing. This was to convert Bermuda, remote in the Atlantic, into a university island for the British and American Colonies and was made by the philosopher Bishop

Berkeley. The proposal came to nothing but the curious can read of it in the recent life of Berkeley by Dr. A. A. Luce.

Jamaica was the scene of the next College, but it was not as successful as Codrington. The capital of the island had been moved to Kingston in 1870 and the Georgian buildings round the central square of Spanish Town, the old capital, were vacant. The Governor of the time proposed to convert the square into a college quadrangle, and Queen's College was founded there in 1876, but there seems to have been more vision than practical sense in the planning and the College lasted little more than a year. The first Principal, an Oxford man, died of yellow fever and was succeeded by Grant Allen who had little heart in the project. Still the need was there and a further attempt was made in 1890 when University College was founded near Kingston in connection with Jamaica College, an existing secondary school for boys. Students were trained to take the external degrees of the University of London, but the smallness of their numbers and problems of finance presented constant difficulties and in 1902 the institution was amalgamated with Jamaica College, and their combined resources used for developing the efficient boys' school that exists on the site today.

The West Indies was still in need of university education and increasingly large numbers of young people were going to the universities of Great Britain, Canada and the United States. The secondary schools, many of them founded in the eighteenth century, were more advanced than in Africa or the East and several of the Colonies were devoting public money to sending a few of their products for higher education overseas. There was a widespread feeling that this was not enough: universities overseas cannot become the centre which the developing intellectual interests of the Caribbean Colonies demanded, and in several of these Colonies groups of people formed themselves into committees with the object of pressing for something in the Caribbean itself. In 1926 the Colonies established a standing Conference to consider this among other things and Jamaica set up a committee on the subject in 1938.

WEST INDIES COMMITTEE

The appointment in 1943 of the Asquith Commission to enquire into higher education in the Colonies thus found in the British West Indies one of their most important tasks. In Africa and Malaya there were already institutions which could be developed to university status, but in the Caribbean there was nothing except Codrington while at the same time there was an urgent local demand. The Commission therefore appointed a special West Indies Committee, often called the Irvine Committee from the name of its chairman, Sir James Irvine, Vice-Chancellor of St. Andrews. The other members were Sir Raymond Priestley, Vice-Chancellor of Birmingham, Miss Margery Perham of Oxford, Mr. P. M. Sherlock of Jamaica and Mr. H. W. Springer of Barbados. The committee was appointed in January, 1944 and lost no time in getting down to work, in spite of the war. The members from Great Britain reached Trinidad by mid-February. The committee spent three months in the Caribbean Colonies, in several of which they were strengthened by inviting suitable residents to join in their deliberations, and having returned to Great Britain via Puerto Rico, Washington and Montreal, their report (Cmd. 6654) was finished by August.

The Irvine Report, as it is commonly called, is the basis on which the University College has been established. It was presented to Parliament in June, 1945 and circulated to the Governments of the Colonies concerned, all of whom welcomed it with open arms. In essence it recommended that to serve the needs of Barbados, British Guiana, British Honduras, Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Windward Islands, a University College should be established in Jamaica to provide for teaching and research in the Faculties of Arts, Natural Science and Medicine and that it should resemble in constitution the universities of Great Britain. It should be governed by a Council which should include representatives of the Governments concerned and of the academic staff. Academic questions should be under the control of a Senate composed of representatives of the academic staff. The College should be residential with halls of residence in which the undergraduates should reside throughout the academic year. They recommended that a grant towards capital expenditure should be made from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds, but realised that the cost of recurrent expenditure would have to fall on the Colonies in the scheme.

GEOGRAPHY

It is as well at this stage to say a word about the geographical problem which has to be faced. The British Caribbean Colonies are sometimes thought of as a compact group like the Hebrides, but that is an illusion based on looking at small scale maps. To translate the distances into European terms, let us place British Honduras, the most westerly of the Colonies, at London. Jamaica is then roughly at Danzig in the Baltic, Trinidad is at Odessa in the Black Sea, with the Windwards and Leewards stretching up north far to the east of Moscow and British Guiana is Asia Minor, almost at Batum. Or in other terms, British Guiana to British Honduras is as far as Cornwall is from Newfoundland. Yet in all these distances the population is only of the order of three million. Jamaica has almost half of this sum, Trinidad has about half a million and the rest are distributed in small packets over an immense area. The Irvine Committee decided to recommend Jamaica as the place for the University College. The alternative was, presumably, to choose one of the smaller charming islands and allow it to develop with a University as its main activity. Grenada, a tropical island straight out of the story book, would have been delightful and it has reasonably good communications. Still, there is little doubt that the committee was right. The days of ivory towers are past. A university institution should be in touch with a population if it is to have its full effect. Undergraduate teaching and research must be its basic task, but it should extend its influence in all kinds of other ways and isolation is not the way to do that. The geographical picture, however, immediately raises many difficulties and among them the equality of opportunity for young men and women to go to the University College. Air transport is almost the only way of getting to Jamaica and with the distances the fares are expensive. The Jamaicans would thus have a financial advantage but for the recommendation of the Irvine Committee that the cost of transport to Jamaica at the beginning of the University course and the return fare at the end should be a charge on the University College revenues.

ACADEMIC STATUS

The Asquith Commission mentioned above had made a general recommendation for all the university institutions which were to be developed in colonial territories. During their formative years they were to have a foster mother, the University of London. Before they reached full university status and awarded their own degrees, they were to work for London degrees, but not for the old external degrees as the University College of Ceylon did after the first World War. The new institutions were to be in a "special relationship" with London, the Colonial University Colleges having the initiative in proposing the syllabus of each examination. After agreement had been reached, the examining boards were to include members of the University College staffs as well as examiners appointed by London. In this way it was hoped that the staffs would rapidly acquire experience and a proper sense of responsibility so that the transition to full university status could take place as soon as possible. The responsibility of foster mother was shouldered by London who set up a special arrangement which has been in operation since October, 1948 and is working extremely well. Indeed the exchange of letters between the Special Committee and the Senate of the University College saying how well they are getting on together is tending to become monotonous.

FIRST STEPS

A Principal was appointed in October, 1946 and reached Jamaica in the following month. Early in January, 1947 meetings took place of the Provisional Council. There was yet no constitution, but decisions had to be made in order to implement the Irvine Report, so that representatives of the seven Colonies or groups of Colonies came to Jamaica together with Sir James Irvine and Sir Raymond Priestley. Among these decisions there were two of importance. The first concerned the means whereby the University College could become a corporation in the legal sense, empowered to own property, enter into contracts and act legally as a person. Legislative act by some properly constituted legislature was difficult because of the multiplicity of legislatures concerned: there are ten since the Windward Islands are a group of four independent colonies, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Dominica, with a Governor in common but no joint legislature. Legislation by Jamaica alone would have been sufficient, but would not mark the participation of all the Caribbean Colonies in the enterprise. Procedure by Order in Council was impossible since for certain historical reasons such Orders do not apply in all the Colonies involved. It was therefore decided that the most suitable method was by asking for the grant of a Royal Charter. Fortunately the rather cumbrous machinery whereby university institutions obtain Royal Charters could be circumvented in this case since a Minister of State has direct access to the Privy Council and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, at that time Mr. Creech-Jones, was eager to do all in his power. Hence after a good deal of drafting and re-drafting a Charter based on those granted to the more modern universities of Great Britain was submitted to the Privy Council and passed under the Great Seal in January, 1949. The Charter does not, of course, give any powers for the granting of degrees, but it and the annexed Statutes are drafted so that when the time comes, only minor additions will be necessary to promote the University College to full university status. The fate of the original document has a certain pathetic interest. It was despatched by air mail to Jamaica and placed on

board the Tudor aircraft "Star Ariel" which disappeared mysteriously between Bermuda and the Bahamas in January, 1949. It is thus lost for ever and cannot be replaced since no document can pass under the Great Seal more than once. However the Privy Council agreed to issue Letters Patent in which the fate of the original Charter is recorded and its provisions are recited and so the University College has a historic document to record its foundation. H.M. the King consented to become the Visitor of the University College and to nominate the Chancellor. It has often been remarked that a University College ought not to have a Chancellor but a President. The decision by the Provisional Council to ask for a Chancellor was largely based on the fact that the Caribbean Colonies form part of the New World and in them New World terminology is in constant use: in the United States a President is the chief executive officer of a university institution and confusion could easily arise between a President and a Principal.

COAT OF ARMS

Other matters of this sort can be mentioned here. It was agreed that from the start the University College should exercise the right granted by the Charter to have a coat of arms. Arms were granted by the College of Arms in 1949 in a beautiful document which will also be one of the treasures of the College archives. The shield has a main background of blue and white wavy lines to show the sea and on them is the open book: the upper part of the shield, the chief, is red with a lion to show the connection with the Crown, but the lion is ermine, in other words is covered with black spots. This is the lion borne by H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, appointed by the King as the first Chancellor, so that this appointment is recorded for ever in the arms. The crest is the brown pelican which fishes in its prehistoric fashion along the coasts of all the Colonies: the pelican is a symbol of care for the young because of the mediaeval, but untrue, belief that it punctures its breast to feed its young on its blood and it is used as crest by both the Corpus Christi Colleges, at Oxford and Cambridge. The motto was a matter of very serious debate since classical studies flourish in some of the Caribbean Colonies possibly more actively than they do in Great Britain. eventually *Oriens ex occidente lux* was chosen.

ACADEMIC DRESS

Academic dress was a simple matter. In the bright light of the tropics black is a poor colour and there is one university in Great Britain which clothes its undergraduates in something different. This is St. Andrews to which the University College already owes so much through the labours of its Vice-Chancellor. Hence the request was made that academic dress might be after the fashion of St. Andrews and, this having been granted, the scarlet undergraduate gown can be seen today on all formal occasions in Jamaica. By this means future generations will be put in mind of the debt we owe to Scotland.

SITE

The second important decision concerned the site. Jamaica is a well-known holiday and health resort and abounds in beautiful places: its mountains rise to Blue Mountain Peak (7,388 feet) and its north coast is dotted with white bathing beaches and luxury hotels designed for the American tourist trade. The choice of

site was, however, restricted by various factors, notably the needs of the University College Hospital, essential for the creation of a medical school. This has to be within easy reach of a centre of population so that the out-patient department and the wards can get their material. The site clearly had to be somewhere near, but not too near, the capital Kingston, a city of over 150,000 inhabitants. Eventually a site of just over one square mile was chosen about seven miles from the centre of Kingston and it has been made over by the Government of Jamaica to the College and its Hospital on a lease of 999 years at a pepper-corn rent. The site occupies the end of a valley with the foothills of the Blue Mountains rising to the north and east and a limestone ridge nearly 2,000 feet high separating it from the sea on the south. It is possibly not quite so beautiful as the new site of the University of Ceylon since Jamaica has no noble rivers like the Mahaweli Ganga, but it must be among the most beautiful sites in the world, especially at sunset with the changing colours of the mountains and the cloud shadows and the twinkling lights of the hill villages at four and five thousand feet. The area is, of course, far larger than is needed at first: it should give plenty of room for expansion for a hundred years or more. Jamaica is in an earthquake zone, Kingston was largely destroyed by earthquake in 1907, so that high buildings are impossible and wide spacing desirable and this demands ample space. From the point of view of general amenities the site is good: there is an almost detached area of 80 acres of flat land to be developed for games which should become one of the most beautiful cricket grounds in the world and where, perhaps, in the days to come the test matches against England will be played. Kingston is within easy reach by bus and in less than an hour by car one can be at 4,500 feet in a different world.

PERMANENT BUILDINGS

Much about the same time as the appointment of the Principal, the firm of Norman & Dawbarn of London was selected as architects for the buildings, and in due course the lay-out was decided. This has been designed for the future rather than for the next few years. All buildings have been sited so that they have plenty of room for expansion and sites have been allocated for buildings which cannot be built at the moment. Future needs cannot be foretold so that large reserve areas are also left for the departments which the changing functions of a Colonial University may demand fifty years hence. In the meantime these areas will give a peaceful background of cattle grazing under trees. The result of this is, however, that no immediate architectural effect is expected: for a good many years the buildings will be isolated and appear to be dotted about, but architectural effects of the European kind are hardly appropriate in a setting of tropical mountains which dwarf human structures. The erection of permanent buildings is, of course, complicated by the high costs of today and in addition to the buildings, roads, water mains, sewage, electricity distribution and so on have to be provided for out of the available capital. The result is that present resources only permit the erection of the library, the science laboratories, halls of residence for men and women undergraduates, lecture rooms and accommodation for arts subjects and housing for the academic staff. One part of the site was used during the war to accommodate some of the inhabitants of Gibraltar and Malta and these were housed in wooden huts. The whole of this hutting, which included offices, store rooms and canteens, was

purchased from the War Office. It was therefore decided that there was no immediate necessity to build permanent office accommodation for the Registrar, the Bursar, the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, &c. Heated buildings are not needed in a climate where the thermometer never drops below about 65° and usually to about 70°. The huts will be used as long as they last. The erection of permanent buildings is a slow business nowadays and it was not until the spring of 1949 that the firm of Higgs and Hill were selected as contractors. The first undergraduate hall of residence, to house 160 together with some of the bachelor staff, was ready for use in October, 1950. Four such halls are in the present programme and it is expected that each will develop characteristics of its own and that they will play the part in university life provided by the Colleges of the older universities. If all goes well, the library should be ready in the summer of 1951, together with some of the laboratories. The Hospital, essential for clinical teaching, is needed urgently and should be ready by the end of 1951. In the first stage it will provide for 200 beds and it is intended to erect more wards later until there are 500 beds. The various departments, such as X-ray, pathology and out-patients, have been designed for the larger number but will be built now.

TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENTS

The existence of the huts made it possible to begin work without waiting for the permanent buildings. At the end of 1946 there was an urgent demand for medical training in the West Indies and admission to medical schools in Great Britain, Canada and the United States was almost impossible because of the pressure of ex-service candidates. Hence temporary arrangements were made: suitable wooden buildings were adapted and turned into laboratories, a library, undergraduates' bed-sitting rooms, offices, a chapel and lecture rooms, and in October, 1948 the first undergraduates came into residence and begun work for the 1st M.B. of the University of London. There were 34 of them, of which 10 were women, and nearly all the Colonies in the scheme were represented; one came from the Turks Islands, a salt-producing dependency of Jamaica lying to the north near the Bahamas. In October, 1949 teaching began for the general degree in natural science and in October, 1950 the first arts students appeared. The intention is to build up an undergraduate body of about 700, of which it is expected that about 200 will be in the Faculty of Medicine. The following departments are already in existence and are either partially or completely staffed: mathematics, physics, chemistry, zoology, botany, physiology, biochemistry, human anatomy, modern history, modern languages and English. These will be followed by others until the normal curricula in the Faculties of Medicine, Natural Science and Arts are available. It is also intended to open a department of education during 1951 to help in providing for the urgent need for trained teachers in the secondary schools. Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) have made a generous benefaction of £5,000 towards the cost of a building for this. Without efficient secondary teaching in the various Colonies the efforts of the University College will be largely wasted and we are selfishly interested in their future.

STAFF

The staff has been appointed on the simple basis of taking the best available person irrespective of where he or she comes from. It would have been convenient

in many ways if the staff, like the undergraduates, could have been West Indians from the start, but West Indians have followed comparatively few departments of study and in some subjects persons with the necessary knowledge and experience do not yet exist. The quality of the staff is a matter of the highest importance since it determines the academic standards and traditions of the future and the people of the Caribbean Colonies realize this: there has been no feeling against the appointment of non-West Indians. At the moment the staff is cosmopolitan or at least represents a good deal of the British Commonwealth. Mathematics and physics are under the charge of West Indians: the Librarian was deputy librarian of the University of Capetown: the professor of chemistry comes from New Zealand as does a member of the botany department. The professors of physiology and pathology are from Durham and the senior biochemist is a Canadian. The professor of modern languages comes from Edinburgh but was born in Germany. History and English are run by Cambridge men. The Principal is English and the Registrar, Barbadian but both come from Oxford. This is as it should be. As the years pass the proportion of West Indians will increase rapidly, but there is always the need for cross-fertilization in university staffs and it may well be that the new university institutions in the British tropical regions will provide training grounds for each other in this way.

FINANCES

The finances of the University College fall into two sections: the money needed as capital for buildings and equipment and that needed for recurrent expenditure to meet salaries, wages, departmental grants and general running expenses. The agreement between the British Government and the Colonies in the scheme is that, in general, capital is provided from the higher education allocation of the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund while recurrent expenditure is to be covered by contributions from the revenues of the Colonies. For the capital a sum of £1,500,000 has been provided and in addition a sum not exceeding £410,000 towards the cost of building and equipping the hospital. The Government of Jamaica has contributed £250,000 towards the hospital from its own allocation of Colonial Development and Welfare grants. Large as these sums may seem, it must be remembered that everything must be provided from scratch and that they may have to provide not only buildings, but books for a library of university standard, laboratory equipment and apparatus for science and medical departments, furniture for undergraduate accommodation, for lecture rooms and offices, roads, drainage, sewage disposal, light and water and a multiplicity of other items. It has already been pointed out the grants at present day prices are insufficient for all the buildings and equipment needed and temporary arrangements will be made until further financial support is forthcoming.

As to recurrent expenditure a conference was held at Montego Bay in 1947 at which the Governments of all the Colonies in the scheme were represented. They agreed to provide the necessary funds for the period 1947-1953 and to share the cost in proportion to their populations. This means that Jamaica bears 45.4 per cent., Trinidad 17.9 per cent., British Guiana 12.9 per cent., the Windward Islands 10.3 per cent., Barbados 7.4 per cent., the Leeward Islands 3.9 per cent., and British Honduras 2.2 per cent. It was further agreed in principle that after 1953 when data would be available for better estimates, money should be provided in quinquennial

grants, as in Great Britain with the Universities Grants Committee, with freedom for the University College to expend as it thought best. The conference in 1953 will review the existing arrangements for sharing the burden and decide on the first of the quinquennial grants. Money is scarce in the Caribbean because the productivity per head of the population is low and government revenues are much smaller than in Europe. This is the fact that is sometimes overlooked by critics of the existing hospitals, prisons and welfare services. All of these could be improved no doubt, but where under the present economy is the money to pay for the improvements? It is unlikely, however, that the University College will be seriously hampered by lack of money though it will not be able to undertake the comparatively lavish expenditure that is becoming common in Great Britain. It is generally realized that the University College should be a factor, and an important factor, in the development of the Colonies. This is the only sure road to increased revenues, and this fact is an overwhelming argument for supporting it adequately.

RESEARCH FACILITIES

On the academic side something must be said of the University College as a future contributor to the world of learning. The College will fail in realizing its ambition if it does not take its place in that world as a centre where active work goes on and useful additions are made to the stock of knowledge. If it fails, it will not be for lack of opportunity. The Caribbean is still to a surprisingly large extent an unexplored territory. Work has been done in its history, its geology and natural history, its economics and social conditions, but the surface has only been scratched. Here we have great hopes and a beginning has already been made. An Institute for Social and Economic Research has been established through the financial support given by the Colonial Social Science Research Council and a Director was appointed in 1948. He is a West Indian, born in the tiny island of Nevis in the Leewards, and a graduate of Cornell and Harvard. Staff is being recruited and there are plans for enquiries to be carried out in several of the Colonies. This work will be of value in a variety of ways: proper fiscal provision is almost impossible to make in many of the Colonies because of lack of knowledge of national income: the economics of tropical agriculture, and especially of peasant agriculture, need much more attention. It will also be of great value to the University College which soon must undertake instruction in the social sciences and will look to the Institute for the facts on which to base its teaching. In addition to subjects such as these, there are opportunities for useful work in practically every field, though admittedly certain subjects which demand all the resources of a highly developed technical industry, such as a part of modern atomic physics, will not be so suitable. For the biological sciences the area covered by the Colonies in the University College scheme contains examples of nearly every tropical habitat, from the rain forests of British Guiana to the coral islands of the Lesser Antilles, and perhaps before long the College will be able to maintain field stations in varied places for the use of research workers. There are already plans for establishing a station for marine zoology: the site has been chosen about ten miles away from the University College and the land leased from the Government of Jamaica. In medicine and the medical sciences there is much to do, though Jamaica is too healthy a place for many tropical diseases. Tropical nutrition is of the greatest importance, especially if one thinks of the

development of the human resources. Agriculture is already largely provided for by the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad, but many of the basic problems are those of zoology, botany and chemistry and need attacking in university laboratories. Historians have their chance not only in archives of the West Indian governments but also in their comparative proximity to the archives of Central America and the northern parts of Latin America. In physics there are the unexplored regions of bio-physics and soil physics. For archaeologists there is possibly not much. This is an area where the original inhabitants were comparatively primitive people. British Honduras has its Mayan relics but it will be hard to compete with the wealth devoted by the United States to the exploration of Mayan civilization. It is clearly the duty of the University College to encourage all these studies and hence one of its first tasks is to build up its library and laboratories to a standard where they can be the beating heart of active investigation.

INSTALLATION OF CHANCELLOR

The University College began its work in October, 1948 without any flourish of trumpets. Undergraduates came into residence, classes and lectures began and there was no public ceremony. There were, however, audible flourishes of trumpets and much ceremony in February of this year when the first Chancellor was installed. This has been described in the West Indies as the most impressive ceremony ever seen there. The setting was the ground where, as mentioned above, future test matches may well be played and a simple dais with a screen behind it had been erected. The audience was between three and four thousand and included five of the Governors in the Caribbean, representatives of all the legislatures, of the Churches, of the professional associations and of the people. The Principal's procession entered led by the undergraduates in their scarlet gowns, then the academic staff and the members of the Senate and of the Council. Representatives of universities followed and then the Vice-Chancellors of St. Andrews, London, Birmingham, and McGill and then the Earl of Athlone in his robes as Chancellor of the University of London, the train held up by his page, a Jamaican undergraduate in scarlet gown. Later in the ceremony there was a fanfare of trumpets and H.R.H. Princess Alice was led on the dais followed by her page, a woman undergraduate from Grenada, carrying the Chancellor's robes on her arm. And so the ceremony proceeded with proper dignity and its effect was enormous. Many of those present were profoundly moved as messages of congratulations and encouragement, many of them beautifully engrossed, were presented to the newly installed Chancellor, messages from Harvard and Chicago, from New Zealand and South Africa, from Oxford and Cambridge, from universities in England and Scotland and Northern Ireland. The members of the University College were moved too: it made them realize that they now had some claim to belong to the commonwealth of free universities and that they must earn their membership. They were moved also by the presence of the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor of London, their foster-mother: it was a sign that the relationship between them was no pretence but an active co-operation.

There were other ceremonies as well. Foundation stones were laid and speeches made and finally there were services in the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Holy Trinity and in the Anglican Cathedral of St. Catherine in the ancient capital, Spanish

Town. This latter is the oldest ecclesiastical building in the British Caribbean, the existing structure dating from 1714 after the first had been destroyed by hurricane two years earlier. Some present in the Cathedral that day heard prayers which they had last heard in the college chapels of Oxford and Cambridge and which they had never expected to hear in the West Indies. All these ceremonies ended with the departure of the Chancellor from Kingston Harbour in a cruiser, with members of the staff in academic dress on the quarter-deck taking their leave and the Chancellor's own version of the Royal Standard flying at the fore-mast. This is all very suitable for a University College set in an island in a tropical sea, but it must be the first time that such a thing has happened in the long history of universities.

RACE QUESTION

For those who do not know the West Indies it will be as well to say something of the race question. It has been suggested above that in its earlier history an island like Jamaica can be compared with one of the southern states of the United States of America, but the parallel is by no means close in later history. There is no colour bar in the Caribbean Colonies. Children of all races go to the same schools: positions in Government are open to all. The present undergraduates population of the University College contains representatives of most of the many strains that have built up the population, African, Chinese, European, Levantine and Indian. They differ in colour and physiognomy, but they live together happily and, as is right and proper, hardly think of their physical differences. So may it remain. There is no future prosperity or happiness in regions such as these, where many races have mingled, if questions of race arise. All must recognise their equality as men and work together for the good of the whole community.

EXTRA-MURAL STUDIES

There is one department of the University College which raises special problems and deserves special mention, the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, now under the direction of Mr. Philip Sherlock, a member of the Irvine Committee. The remarks made above on the geography of the Colonies show where the problems lie. The universities of Great Britain have assumed extra-mural responsibilities far from their immediate neighbourhood, but for them far means at its furthest less than a hundred miles. In the West Indies the distances are so much greater: to revert to an earlier parallel, it is as though the University College of the South West in Exeter had to think of organising work in Newfoundland or Constantinople. The solution is the appointment of a Resident Tutor in each of the Colonies to be the chief organizer of this work. The responsibility is great and in some respects goes beyond what is normally expected of those who hold extra-mural appointments. The tutor must be the local representative of the University College, its outpost and its public relations officer, dealing in the first instance with applications for admission, enquiries about syllabuses and a multitude of details. For the University College to keep in proper touch with its Resident Tutors is not easy when there is so much to be done on the spot. Nevertheless, there are now seven tutors at work, from British Honduras through Jamaica and the Lesser Antilles to Trinidad and British Guiana and their enthusiasm and energy is being rewarded by the response to their

work, local enthusiasm and energy which is increasing all the time. The best way for the University College to support this work will be learnt by experience and it must be learnt. The success of the College depends on the goodwill and enthusiasm of the people of the Colonies and for more than half of these the Extra-Mural Department is the only one with which they are in personal touch.

NEED FOR SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

There are many other points which could be discussed; the support the University College has already received from generous benefactors, the further support that it needs and will continue to need. This latter is particularly true in scholarships: the low income for each head of the population means not only that many able boys and girls cannot be financed at the University College from family resources, but more than that, the Government revenues cannot provide state scholarships and exhibitions on anything like the scale which is possible in more wealthy countries. Generous benefaction for this purpose would go far in assuring the future usefulness of the University College and also the future development of the West Indies where much valuable brain power has been wasted in the past through lack of opportunity for proper mental training and discipline.

CONCLUSION

Let me close on a somewhat different level. Not only do we hope that the University College will become a mental training ground for the able young people of the West Indies and that it will be a centre of intellectual life which will broaden interests and encourage aspirations, but we also expect that it will provide other opportunities. Because of its position, the College has already had to begin the teaching of certain trades. It has its own book-binding shop and its own scientific workshop and West Indians are already being trained to bind books, to blow glass, to work in wood and metal and to be laboratory technicians. All the laboratory benches, cupboards and racks, and all the furniture for undergraduate rooms and offices are made from the local woods in the College's own joinery shop. (As the Vice-Chancellor of London remarked when she saw this going on, one of the conditions which it seems must be fulfilled in choosing the site of a new university institution is that there should be an ample supply of good local wood). As soon as funds can be obtained, the University College will undoubtedly set up its own printing press and not only use it for its own purposes but also, it is hoped, strive to raise the standard of printing in the West Indies. Hence even in the manual trades the University College has its part to play in the future of the British Caribbean Colonies.

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West Indian Family Organisation

FERNANDO HENRIQUES

This article appeared in the American Journal of Sociology, Vol. LV. We are indebted to the Editors of the Journal and to the author for permission to print it in "Caribbean Quarterly".

WEST INDIAN NEGRO SOCIETY is bounded by poverty and color frustration. The island of Jamaica is taken as typical of society in the Caribbean. The family or domestic group in this society can be regarded as a phenomenon *sui generis*. Four types can be distinguished: Christian family, faithful concubinage, maternal or grandmother family, and keeper family. These familial forms exhibit a marked degree of stability. But they can be regarded as indicative of the disequilibrium inherent in the society. The contemporary family structure of the Negro in the New World is the result of plantation slavery rather than of a West African tradition.

When discovered by Columbus in 1492, the West Indies were inhabited by Tanala, Arawak, and Carib Indian tribes. In a comparatively short time through the rigors of enslavement these tribes became, in most areas, almost entirely extinct. As the European powers turned from the vain search for gold to tobacco—and sugar-planting, the demand for a labor force began to grow. At first the experiment with European indentured labor was tried under conditions very like actual slavery. The experiment was a failure, and the Europeans were soon replaced by African slave labor.

The Negro slaves in the New World were drawn from a great area of Africa stretching from northern Nigeria to south of the Congo. It was not only the coastal regions which were involved for there are references in the literature to Negroes from eastern and central Africa brought across the continent by coiffe to slave ports on the western coast. There are even some references to slaves from Madagascar. Some of the designations utilized in old Caribbean slave lists, too, may give an indication of the variety of tribal groupings concerned: Fan, Whydah, Moccoe, Fanti, Nago, Yoruba, Coromantyn (Ashanti), Egba, Ibo, Ewe, and Madagass.

Crossing the Atlantic meant for the Negro a complete break with his traditional type of society. Customs, social sentiments, and patterns of behaviour could survive only as ideas and oral traditions, for there were no special mechanisms in the new society by which they could be perpetuated.

The society into which the Negro was inducted was radically different from any type of African society. Plantation slavery in the West Indies involved a constant supply of Negroes, who constituted the actual labor force both in the fields and in the homes, the supply being maintained both by frequent importations and by local breeding, chiefly the former. Slaves were forced to live in barracks or in huts. As the slave might be sold at any time to another local owner or into the American colonies, there was no real security. Obviously this affected his domestic behaviour,

since any union he might contract with a woman was liable to be broken up. Again the owner would often encourage his female slaves to breed from a number of men, even offering prizes for this purpose, in the mistaken belief that intercourse with a number of men increased fecundity. In other words, slaves were not permitted to form permanent unions on either an African or a European model. Family life under these conditions was impermanent. Thus the emphasis in the contemporary slave family was upon the mother-child relationship.

It was the common practice among the owners and European plantation employees to take concubines from among the better-looking of the female slaves. Two patterns can be discerned here. One was the setting up of an independent household for the concubine and her children, both being well cared for by her master-protector. The other was for the concubine to be temporarily lodged in the plantation house. But, after she had out-grown her use, she was returned with her children to the barrack or hut. The female children of such unions quite often became in their turn the mistresses of Europeans. To the female slave concubinage offered an avenue of escape, even though temporary, from oppressive field-labor.

These practices were to have a profound effect not only on the forms of the family but on the whole class-color hierarchy of the society. It can be said that concubinage was the foundation of the present color-class grading system in the West Indies. Christianity with its advocacy of monogamous marriage was unable to make much headway in these conditions. The planters as a group were opposed to the conversion of their slaves lest it increased slave rebellions.

The radical changes introduced by emancipation in 1834 profoundly modified this system. The chief reaction of many of the freed slaves was to get away as far as possible from the plantation and its associations. To begin with, there was great enthusiasm in favour of the orthodox Christian churches, many of which had been in the forefront in the fight for abolition. But this enthusiasm quickly waned, and local "native" churches began to develop.

Although the freed Negro could remove himself from the plantation in a physical sense, he was unable to destroy the patterns of behaviour evolved under the system of plantation slavery. This is strikingly seen in the contemporary family structure.

Professor Herskovits' view is that the original West African forms of the family survived in the Caribbean and in the New World generally. My own contention is that the forms of the family in the West Indies are *sui generis*. They are in fact a product of the peculiar conditions of slavery. To some extent these forms may have been influenced by the fact that slaves were largely drawn from polygamous groups, but the dominant influence has undoubtedly been that of slavery.

To substantiate the contrary view—that West African forms have survived into the contemporary scene—it would be necessary to show that patrilineal influence, for example, in Haiti, had produced a different type of family from that existing in Jamaica, where the predominant influence appears to have been matrilineal. Professor Herskovits' own field material on Haiti shows that this is not the case.

Again Leyburn has pointed out that Haitian slaves were drawn from at least thirty-eight African groups, and Freyre has produced similar evidence for Brazil. Since the slaves in the New World were drawn from a great area of Africa, it would have been impossible for any one culture to survive as a whole. In other words, the throwing-together of matrilineal and patrilineal groups in a particular area would have prevented the development of a society of one specific type or the other.

What in fact occurred was that these diverse groups were subjected to the uniformity of slavery. The manifestations of slavery in the New World were very similar. Localized, differences illustrated by religious cult groups have persisted through verbal traditions. There are obvious differences between the Yoruba cults in Trinidad and Brazil and similar cults in Jamaica. But in the sphere which was controlled by the master, family life, the slave was forced into a new mould. That mould was the same in its major aspects all over the New World. The pattern of European-African concubinage and the impermanence of slave sexual relationships is repeated from Brazil to the United States.

Patterns of family life could not survive as a verbal tradition. Whereas the slave could, and did, practice his magic and divination in secret, he could not perpetuate his ancestral family forms in secret. The pattern of his family life was governed by the will of his master. With the exception of the "bush Negro" of Dutch Guiana who has, through isolation, evolved a matrilineal family pattern which owes little to slavery, the contemporary family structure among the New World Negroes can be distinguished as a phenomenon due mainly to the influence of slavery.

Illegitimacy figures for the territories in the Caribbean area fall between 50 and 70 per cent. of the total of live births. Thus, the so-called "deviation" from the norm of Christian monogamous marriage is fairly uniform over the whole area, and a similar type of family organization exists through-out the region. A discussion of family life in Jamaica supports my contention that the Negro family in the New World is *sui generis*.

The class structure in Jamaica can be seen as a division into three classes: lower (85 per cent. of the population), middle, and upper. These classes are determined by a variety of factors, including color, income and prestige.

The primary group is the elementary biological family, consisting of a man, a woman, and their children, real and socially ascribed. There has been a tendency to equate family and marriage, but, as Linton points out, "the personnel and function of this (conjugal) group may coincide with those of the authentic family in certain societies but they do not do so for human societies as a whole. Marriage and the family are really separate institutions and must be considered separately". The tendency to equate marriage and the family is due to the fact that in western Europe this coincidence often takes place, and it is difficult for Europeans to dissociate them dealing with other societies.

Domestic groupings can be divided into those with a conjugal and those with a consanguineous basis; that is, into groupings which stress the husband-wife relationship and those which stress the blood relationships of either the father or the mother. Western Europe exemplifies the former while parts of Africa exemplify the latter.

Jamaican family structure does not fall clearly into either category but appears to combine qualities of both. There is however, a tendency in certain types of family grouping to stress the husband-wife relationship. But there is not the same recognition of the monogamous conjugal union as the licit and morally approved means of satisfying sexual needs as there is in western Europe. If this deviation is recognized, the best method of classifying family groupings appears to be the adoption of the term 'domestic group' as the unit of family structure in the island.

In Jamaica the domestic group is the residential unit which constitutes a household. This group may, but this is not always the case, consist of the elementary biological family, that is, of a man, a woman and their real and socially ascribed children. It exists to satisfy the needs of sexual gratification and parent-child relationships (i.e., procreation and child-rearing), common housekeeping and other domestic needs associated with social standing in the community. A domestic group may serve all these needs or only some of them, according to its actual constitution.

Four types of such groups can be distinguished: (a) Christian family, (b) faithful concubinage, (c) maternal or grandmother family, and (d) keeper family.

The classification is not rigid, since a domestic group can in its history experience all these forms. Also there are groups which exhibit features of more than one group. But for the purposes of analysis it is necessary to make a broad classification.

Marriage is the cohabitation of a man and woman with the legal and social sanction of a particular society. Type A is the only form of family group which is based on marriage; the others have apparent community tolerance but no legal sanction. Jamaica is thus a society in which there is a contradiction, as regards conjugal unions between what is legally accepted as the norm for the whole society and what is actually socially accepted. This contradiction or opposition between legal and social acceptance applies to other situations, beside the family.

Cohabitation is the mark of the domestic group of Types A, B, and D, but it is not apparent in the case of Type C. A domestic group does not depend on cohabitation, for cohabitation helps to determine the type of family but not the existence of the family.

It must be emphasized that the classification of family groups is not of such fundamental importance as an understanding of the functions of such groups in the society.

Stability and continuity in the family are more assured where there is a greater emphasis on the consanguineous as opposed to the husband-wife relationship. That stability is exhibited to a marked degree by the society considered.

The total number of mothers in Jamaica in 1942 was 258,842. Approximately 34 per cent. were listed as married, 54 per cent. as unmarried, and 12 per cent. as widowed or divorced.

The attitude toward legal marriage is ambivalent. Unmarried mothers questioned will express a desire to be married, but frequently the same persons will say that they are not sure of the man and wish to wait until they are or until the 'right' man comes along. Although no social stigma attaches to the unmarried state, and 'living in sin' is not a term of reproach, marriage is regarded often as an ideal not within the woman's reach. Marriage to the lower-class woman, means a better home and, above all, a servant. Many Christian households were found in which a servant was kept. In other words, the economic condition is of some importance in determining legal marriage. The majority of cases of monogamy was found among the better-off members of the lower class. A typical case is that of a man who combined peasant proprietorship with work as a carpenter or factory hand. Since the Jamaican insists on a 'show' for his wedding, another obstacle is the actual cost of the ceremony. People must be entertained with music, rum, and food; if this can not be done, it would not be a 'proper' wedding.

Another fear expressed by unmarried mothers is that marriage will lead to undue domination of her by the man. This may be a very real fear, as there is no

doubt that the monogamous union is a family strictly ruled by the husband-father, whereas in Types B, C, and D the woman is quite often the dominant member of the family. In practice the unmarried union leads to equality between the sexes.

Color does not enter much into the situation. The majority of the lower class is black, as is the majority of the better-off section of this class. Color only operates in the usual way in governing the choice of a mate; an attempt is always made to secure a woman lighter in complexion and with 'better' features and hair.

The typical monogamous family lives in a three-room wooden house with a corrugated iron roof. One room will be a living room, the others bedrooms. There may be more than one bed for the children, and this is of great importance, since it affects their early sexual habits. The fact that children do not sleep in the same room with their parents is of equal importance. The family gathers in the evenings on the veranda, and friends are entertained there. If in a town, the house has electric light. In physical layout the home will correspond with a simplified version of the middle-class home.

The father will have a regular job and a small cultivation either adjacent to the house or up in the 'bush'. He will be the sole wage-earner unless sons are of sufficient age to be working (about fourteen). He will give his wife money for household expenses, but there is no question of his turning over his weekly earnings to her. He is the final authority in all disputes in the home. The children attend school regularly and have more or less adequate clothing to do so. The whole family will be assiduous in its church-going. Diet will be sufficient if not sufficiently nutritious. Such a household may consist of the man and his wife, from two to eight children of the couple, the man's mother, rarely with wife's mother, the father's sister and her children, and the servants.

In all small matters the mother is the authority, that is to say, in the daily running of the house. She gives the servant orders, goes to market, &c., but anything requiring a more-than-routine decision is referred to the father. In disputes between the husband and wife, the grandmother often sides with the wife although normally she does not interfere. The wife does not attend to the cultivation unless she wishes to, and she is not forced to do so by the husband. He works the cultivation much as the English allotment holder, that is, in his spare time and at week ends. The wife may sell the produce in the market or get a friend to do so, but she has to account to the husband for the money.

Disputes are frequent in the family during the adolescence of the children. They may come about through the choice of work for the sons or at the girls' running wild with boys. In some cases the children will leave home either to get a job in the capital or to live with some other family. From an early age children are subjected to physical punishment, the father often enforcing his authority with a belt or strap. Meals are taken in common, and this acts as a binding force for the whole family.

The picture which emerges is reminiscent of the respectable Victorian working-class family in which the husband was a sober and steady person in regular employment. The atmosphere is markedly religious, and the patriarchal position of the father is reinforced by frequent reading of the Bible.

The maintenance of this type of family is governed by the regularity in the man's employment, which gives to it economic stability. His sexual needs are satisfied within marriage. If he does feel the temptation to go outside, religion and

respectability are liable to prevent him: to do so would be to betray the group and place him with the undesirable elements of his class. This feeling is very strong.

Increased income is a contributory factor of monogamy. There are many instances of better-off couples in the lower class classified under Type A who have preserved some of the tradition of peasant people who after emancipation were extremely religious, as many authorities testify. Such families will be proud of their church connection which dates back two generations or more. It is, however, impossible to say precisely what the motives are which cause one section of the lower class to adopt the manners and morals of the middle class as opposed to the majority of their own class.

The line of demarcation between Type B, the faithful concubinage; Type C, the grandmother or maternal family; and Type D, the keeper family is not so clearly defined as between these forms and Type A, the monogamous union. There is a tendency for Types B, C, and D, to coalesce; that is, a given family unit in its lifetime may experience all three forms.

Type B can be described as the kind of family in which the man lives with the woman as if he were married to her and performs all the functions of a legal husband. There is, of course, the most profound psychological difference between such a household and that described above. A much greater sense of equality exists between the couple. Many women will say that they dislike the idea of marriage since it means being under rule of the man. Such expressions are more common among the couples who have been together only a few years, and they tend to disappear as the household persists.

The grandmother family (Type C) is so called because the grandmother or some female relative, perhaps a sister, usurps the function of the father and, at times, the function of the mother. Such a family may originate through a girl's becoming pregnant while still living at home. The girl's father may not be living at home. The household will possibly consist of her mother, her mother's sister, and the girl's siblings. The girl may continue at home and look after her child, but in case she leaves, the child is reared by its grandmother, being treated in the same way as the other children in the household. If the girl's father lives in the house, he will act toward his grandchild as if it were his child. There are thus two types to be distinguished in Type C: one in which there is no male head of the family and the grandmother or other female relative fulfils the function of both father and mother; another in which the grandmother may stand in the place of the mother, but a man is normally the head of the household.

Pressure may be brought to bear by the girl's family on the father of the child to make him contribute to her and the child's support. She may even have him brought before the court and seek a bastardy order. But neither remedy is effective if the man's whereabouts are unknown. Additional income may be brought into the family. In many instances the girl may move away and send money to her mother and, in other cases, when she has settled down with a man, send for her child.

In the case of Type D, the keeper family, the man and woman live together in a temporary union. He will contribute to the woman's support, but she may continue to work, depending upon how much money he brings home. If the union persists over a period of years, it will come under the heading of a settled concubinage. The arrival of children does not affect the continuance of the union; in fact, the

presence of several children tends to drive the man away, as it makes greater demands on his income.

It can be seen from the description of Types B, C, and D that the psychological and domestic atmosphere of these households differs radically from that of the monogamous union. In Type C the child grows up with no knowledge of its father. The same can be said of Type D, since, by the time the child is of an age to notice its parents, the father may have left the home. It is only in the case of faithful concubinage that conditions do approximate to that of the monogamous union. The female partner in the keeper family is constantly aware of the insecurity of her position, which is the price she pays for her freedom from any restrictions. Although the latter union is on a basis of equality, either partner is likely, if the union is broken up against one or the other's will, to resort to obehah or violence. This may occur in all four types of family, with the lowest incidence for Type A.

It is difficult to make any accurate estimate of the incidence of the different types of families, since the Jamaica census has no classification. A rough estimate from observations in the field would be that, of all households, 25 per cent. would come under the heading 'monogamous unions' and 25 per cent. under 'faithful concubinage' with the remaining 50 per cent. being divided in unknown proportions between Types C and D. Types C and D tend to occur more in the younger age groups in the period of sexual experimentation, although they are by no means confined to such groups. The incidence for town and country does not seem to vary in any marked way. The latter statement is of great importance, since it illustrates the fact that the Jamaican family structure is not due to the degeneration of a rural culture by corrupting urban or industrial influences, as was the case of the southern Negro migrating to the northern cities in the United States, but that it is a natural development of Jamaican society. Actual living conditions, therefore, are of vital importance not in determining the type of family but in affecting the norms of behaviour inside a particular type.

It is not suggested that the four types of family are fixed categories but that there is an essential unity of them all, in part provided by color, and in part by poverty. Again, the rigidity of these divisions is softened by the numerous examples of domestic groups which pass through these forms. That is not to say that there is little form or order in these groups; the contrary is the case. A typical example from any one of the categories will exhibit a definite type of behaviour which justifies its inclusion in its particular category.

Color provides a general uniformity, as the majority of the lower class is black. Again, poverty is the essential background of all lower-class families. If a scale of poverty be made on the level of income, the majority of families will decrease from Type A to Type D. That is to say, those families coming in the category of the Christian family would form the better-off group in the lower class. Those in the keeper family would be nearest to the extreme poverty line. There are, of course, exceptions—examples of Christian families, and the reverse, households in the latter category which enjoy the same level of income as many Christian families. But poverty exists in all groups; it is merely a question of degree.

Low income as opposed to high income will produce poor living conditions, and the actual housing of the lower class is sufficient proof of that. Outbreaks of violence and brutality are due to the cheek-by-jowl existence in overcrowded houses. Bad housing may affect children's attendance at school. With poor sanitary conditions

the disease rate is greater; it undoubtedly creates anxiety about the future and may prevent the development of an active desire for change. In fact, poverty pervades the entire structure of the Jamaican lower-class family. But what it does *not* do is to create the forms of that structure. In that context economic insecurity merely becomes one of several conditions.

The problem confronting the Jamaican peasantry and proletariat is that which is presented to all societies: how to satisfy the needs of sex, procreation, domesticity, prestige, &c. The solution of the problem is determined by the society's past and by its contemporary environment. In the case of Jamaica the freed slave inherited a tradition of slavery. Emancipation meant, for the vast bulk of the slaves, translation to a new world. It meant that after generations of dependence they could now choose the way they would live. That transition from dependence to freedom was, and still is, of supreme psychological importance to the Jamaican.

It cannot be stressed too often that the slave could not marry. The example of his masters was indeed one of marriage, but it was of marriage in conjunction with concubinage. The West African heritage of the ideal polygamy and the dissolubility of marriage may have persisted in a verbal tradition and may have been reinforced by the semblance of polygamy in the slave forms of mating.

The psychological atmosphere of freedom found expression in the almost complete revulsion of the Negro from the estate labor. Similarly there existed the active desire to carry freedom into all forms of life. If this be granted against the background of the factors mentioned, the development of the present family structure can be seen.

The Jamaican lower-class woman both in social and in family affairs has a prominence which is absent in the equivalent European society. Often in a mixed social group, whether a party or a trade union, it is a woman who is the leader, openly or covertly. In the maternal family no male is in authority over the grandmother. In the keeper family there is generally an equality of status and authority between the man and the woman. In any group where the woman is the chief wage-earner she tends to be the final authority and the administrator of the family.

One of the distinctive features of Jamaican lower-class family life is the strong sense of kin beyond that of the immediate family. In any domestic group taken at random there are likely to be adopted children, an aunt, some distant male relative, or perhaps someone who cannot claim any blood relationship whatsoever. All children in the household are treated by the biological siblings as their brothers and sisters. The mother and father make no distinction between the adopted and real children. Those members of the group who do not possess a clearly defined position, as for example, that of an uncle, are addressed as "Coz" or "Cousin". To the child deference is due to all those older than himself, as to his parents. Such persons will, if able, contribute to the upkeep of the household. They are treated as full members in every sense of the word.

Collateral relatives in a domestic group are more often those of the mother than the father. Thus in the maternal family, with the grandmother as its head, there will be a number of her relatives of both sexes. In this type of family the sense of kin is stronger than in the other types. In all matters connected with the family in Jamaica, except in the upper class, there appears to be both an unconscious bias toward the maternal.

In Jamaica lower-class society, because of the general social and economic insecurity, which is reflected in the lower forms of the family, there is a tendency to stress relationships between individuals. As the insecurity diminishes the tendency diminishes. In the upper class there is less of kin feeling, though it is much greater than in the equivalent class in England. This economic interpretation of kinship does not ignore the historical factor, but what may have had historical causation is now supported and controlled by the economic fabric of the society.

The lower-class domestic family satisfies the needs of sex, domesticity, prestige, &c., but it also subserves another important function. Jamaican society is in an acute state of disequilibrium. A vast lower-class population lives barely above the subsistence level. This class is opposed to a small upper class, which, comparatively speaking is extremely wealthy. The contrast between the two modes of living presented to the submerged group results in feelings of envy and frustration. There are no means whereby equality of status can be achieved, for on either hand are the barriers of color and of lack of economic opportunity. This has led to an intensification of family relationships as a substitute for the individual's social and economic advancement. In English society where such barriers do not exist except in fragmentary form there has been a steady decline in the emphasis on family as opportunities for advancement and social security increase.

Although the society is in a state of disequilibrium, this does not mean that the family groupings described are themselves disorganized, as some writers have suggested. In fact, they have exhibited a high degree of stability over a long period. This criticism is due to the error of regarding the family structure of the Jamaican lower-class as a deviant from the West European ideal, evidence of which are the strictures on the so-called illegitimacy rate of 71 per cent. This attitude negates any attempt at a proper analysis of the family structure.

A comparable society in a state of disequilibrium would be that of an occupied European country during the war. The members of the Jewish community, for example, in Holland, although oppressed and persecuted, established a definite behaviour pattern which exhibited stability, yet its existence was a symptom of the disequilibrium inherent in Dutch society at that time.

This article has attempted to show that the Jamaican family structure illustrates the thesis that the forms of the family among the New World Negroes is *sui generis* a phenomenon which owes its character to the historic condition of slavery.

Ships and Seamen in the Age of Discovery

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ONE OF THE outstanding characteristics of Western civilization is its preoccupation with technical problems and its mastery of a wide range of mechanical devices. Technical skill and the ability to turn theoretical knowledge to practical material ends have been major factors in the extension of European influence round the world, and have forcibly, though not always favourably, impressed all the peoples with whom Europeans came into contact. Clearly one of the most important branches of technical ability from the point of view of discovery and expansion is the ability to build and handle ships. In particular the date, the method and the speed of settlement in the Americas were determined by the nature of the shipping available for the purpose. Columbus sailed to America in 1492 with three ships and ninety men. In the years following his discovery hundreds of ships and thousands of people crossed from Europe. Quite apart from any question of Columbus's own knowledge or determination, these events could not have taken place if there had not been appropriate ships for the purpose. America might conceivably, by some fluke of wind or fortune, have become known to Europeans in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. There was no lack of brave seamen and no lack of knowledge that the world was round; and the Norsemen, we know, had reached North America long before Columbus, probably by way of Iceland and Greenland. But if by some chance America had been "discovered" in 1292 or 1392, it could not have been conquered or settled by Europeans, because the ships of that time were not equal to regular voyages across the Atlantic. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were a period of rapid development in ship design. This is an aspect of the history of the Age of Discovery which is often overlooked in the text books, but which is vitally important.

The shipping of Western Europe in the Middle Ages grew from two main stems, the one Mediterranean, the other Atlantic. The Celtic and Scandinavian coast-dwellers of Northern Europe, very early in their recorded history, developed open ships or boats designed for sailing, but fitted with thwarts and tholes for rowing when the wind was wrong. The long-ships of the Norsemen, of which several examples survive, must have been capable of withstanding considerable seas, and the same is probably true of the early ships of other North European peoples, of which much less is known. They were sailing ships built for ocean use. The Mediterranean peoples, on the other hand, at a far earlier date developed a type of ship—the galley—primarily designed for rowing, but capable of proceeding under sail when the wind was right.

A great deal of fifteenth century trade was carried in galleys. In the Mediterranean they were preferred for their speed and reliability and for their independence of the wind. Galleys won the battle of Lepanto. They did not disappear altogether until the eighteenth century. But they were obviously unsuitable for

exploration or for any kind of deep sea work. There is no analogy between steam propulsion and oar propulsion. The provision of steam power greatly reduced the numbers of the crew needed to handle a ship; the provision of oars greatly increased the numbers, and the accommodation of the oarsmen and the stores needed to feed them occupied valuable space and reduced the operating range of the ship. Also the galley's design was unsuitable for the open sea. Its great banks of oars demanded great length in proportion to beam and free board; and in wooden construction this made the ship too whippy to meet head seas with safety. The contribution of galleys to the expansion of Europe was very small.

The other stream of shipbuilding development, descending from the boats of the Scandinavian fishermen and raiders, had produced by the fourteenth century a distinctive type of sailing ship which used oars only in emergency, if at all, and which was common, with minor local variations, to all the Atlantic coasts of Europe. Much of our knowledge of these late mediaeval ships is derived from the municipal seals of the ports of Western Europe, which often included ships in their design; but there are some written records too. In England, in particular, the composition of the Navy is known from time to time from lists of ships either owned, chartered or requisitioned by the King. Perhaps the most surprising thing about some of these ships is their size. The steady increase in seaborne trade in the later Middle Ages had created a need for larger ships. Ships of two or three hundred tons were not uncommon, and some of the biggest class, the carracks which plied between the Italian cities and the ports of Northern Europe, were as big as six hundred tons by the year 1400. But one must accept all tonnage figures with caution. Up to the seventeenth century a ship's tonnage meant the number of tuns of wine which it could carry in cask. The tun was an internationally accepted measure and in most parts of Europe was about forty-two cubic feet of liquid; but casks are awkwardly shaped objects for close stowage. A tun of wine in cask in a ship's hold probably occupied something like sixty cubic feet of hold space, and even so there must have been a good deal of waste space. The capacity ton used nowadays in measuring ships is one hundred feet of permanently enclosed space. Engine room space and the living space of the ship's company is deducted from the gross figure in order to obtain the net or register tonnage. Permanently enclosed space is differently defined in different countries; its capacity is calculated from the dimensions of the ship by an arbitrary formula, so that shape as well as size is a factor in a ship's tonnage. The register tonnage of a ship is thus by no means a certain guide to its actual size. Warships are not measured in capacity tons at all, but by displacement. None of these modern methods of measurement bear any fixed relation either to one another or to the old wine tun. Except in the few cases when actual dimensions are recorded, we have no certain guide to the size of any ship before the seventeenth century. On the whole, it is probable that the ships of our period were considerably smaller than their recorded tonnage figures suggest.

The European ship of 1400 was very beamy. There was no method of longitudinal bracing and the principal stiffening of the hull was the single tree trunk which usually formed the keel. Every increase in size, therefore, involved an increase in the proportion of beam to length in order to prevent the hull becoming dangerously whippy. In large ships, the usual proportion was three to one, taking the extreme overall length. The proportion of length of keel to overall length was small, less than one half. The hull rather resembled an elongated saucer; this shape,

while obviously not conducive to weatherly sailing qualities, did make for stability. Ships so designed probably needed very little ballast, and their topsides could safely be built up to a considerable height. This was a very important factor in time of war, since the sea fighting of the time was mainly a matter of grappling and boarding. Additional height was given by fitting raised castles fore and aft for accommodating crossbowmen and the light artillery of the time. These castles in the middle Ages had usually been temporary structures, since there was as yet no clear distinction between warships and merchantment. Shipbuilding towns often had guilds of castle-wrights, specialised craftsmen whose trade was to convert requisitioned merchant ships into men of war by fitting them with castles. Already by 1400, however, the practice was growing of building a permanently raised fo'c'sle and poop as part of the structure of big ships, a practice carried to excess in the great ships of the sixteenth century. A few other odd details of hull design are worth mentioning. By 1400 big European ships were fully decked. Many of them were carvel-built—that is, with the strakes of the hull fitted flush instead of overlapping. Most of them were steered by a rudder slung on the stern post instead of by an oar over the stern, as in earlier times. Copper sheathing was unknown; barnacles and boring were discouraged by coating the hull with tallow.

European ships of about 1400 were almost all square-rigged. The main characteristic of square rig, of course, is that while it is ideal for running before the wind, it is useless with the wind before the beam. This generalization applies only to pure square rig; the so-called square-rigged windjammer of more modern times was fitted with fore—and aft-sails for beating to windward, in addition to its main suit of square sails. But fore—and aft-rig did not come into general use until the eighteenth century, and our fifteenth century ship had no such refinements. The limitations of its rig were emphasized by the lines of its hull; unless the wind were astern or nearly so, the ship tended to make enormous leeway, and a head wind kept it in harbour.

Square rig has one particularly important advantage; it enables the total sail area of a ship to be divided into a large number of units, each of a size which can be easily handled. A square-rigged ship, therefore, can carry a bigger total area of canvas than any other type. Square rig is, in fact, the only really satisfactory rig for big ships. The ship designers of Western Europe stuck to square rig throughout the whole history of deep water sailing ships for this reason. Handier and more efficient types of sail were introduced from the fifteenth century onwards, and, as we shall see, they improved the sailing qualities of ships enormously; but though they supplemented the traditional square sail, they never ousted it. It was by successive combination of square sails with other types that ship builders of the Atlantic ports were able to achieve the peak of sailing ship perfection in the China Clippers of the last century. But that is looking far ahead. In the year 1400 the principle of breaking up a ship's canvas area for ease of handling was in its infancy. A few big ships had two or even three masts, but most had only one. Each mast carried a single square sail, laced to an enormous yard. The masts were single poles; separate topmasts had not been invented. Topsails, in later years the main driving sails of all big ships, were introduced about 1400, and at first were of pocket-handkerchief size. Recently introduced also was the practice of sending men aloft to furl the sail on the yard, instead of lowering the yard on to the gunwales in harbour or in bad weather at sea.

In general, the sailing ship of Western Europe, though it had attained considerable size by 1400, was still a clumsy and primitive affair. It could carry large numbers of men and a bulky cargo for comparatively short passages with a fair wind, and that was all. It was wholly unsuitable for the business of exploration, for following the windings of strange coasts, exploring estuaries, meeting the dangers of shoals, lee shores and headwinds. In devising craft suitable for voyages of discovery and long distance trade, European mariners had to borrow and adapt non-European designs. The chief innovators in this matter were the Portuguese. The designs which they borrowed, in shipping as in many other branches of research, were Asiatic; to be exact, Arab. At the same time that Europeans were first beginning to think of reaching the East by sea, most of the deep sea trade of the Indian Ocean from Malacca to Ormuz and Suez was being carried in ships of Arab type—the ships compendiously described by Europeans as dhows. Dhow is not an Arabic word, and its use by Europeans covers a considerable variety of Middle Eastern craft of all sizes. The word is used here to describe the characteristic deep water sailing ship of the Indian Ocean which is called by Arab sailors a *baghla*. *Baghla* means a mule, in other words a general carrier. This general cargo carrier of the Middle East is worth describing in detail, partly because of its interesting design and rig, partly because it has exercised a very great indirect influence on the development of sailing craft all over the world. Apart from its richly carved transom stern, which was probably imitated from European ships, it has changed very little since the day when it was first encountered by Europeans.

The Arab dhow is a stoutly built wooden ship, varying considerably in size, but not often exceeding two hundred tons. It has a deep keel, a long grab bow, and a continuous sheer from the bow to the break of the poop. There is no raised fo'c'sle, but a raised poop and a high transom stern which is often very elaborately decorated. The hull is fastened with iron nails and caulked with coconut fibre. The nails are a European innovation. Iron can be used because the ships are built of teak, which preserves iron, unlike oak which corrodes it. It is probable that before the arrival of Europeans in the East, the planking of Arab ships was sewn, not nailed to a frame. In some big dhows there is a double bottom, the space being filled with a mixture of lime and crushed coral which sets as a hard cement. The dhow therefore can stand a good deal of knocking about, and is as watertight as a wooden ship can be.

The dhow usually has two masts with a pronounced forward rake. Each mast carries a single lateen sail; that is, a triangular, or nearly triangular sail, the leading edge of which is laced to a long yard, hoisted obliquely to the mast. The heel of the yard is secured to the deck, usually amidships. The lateen sail is the special contribution of the Arabs to the history of the world's shipping. It is as characteristic of Islam as the crescent itself. It is also an extremely efficient general purpose rig; a lateen rigged ship sails best when reaching with the wind on the beam; but it also performs well when close hauled. The qualities of any sail when beating to windward depend largely on its having the luff—the leading edge—as long and as taut as possible. These qualities are supplied in the lateen sail by the long yard. Lateen rig is least efficient when running before the wind, as one would expect, on account of the danger of gybing. In this point of sailing it is inferior to square rig; but the disadvantage can be overcome to some extent by sailing goose-winged. By simple adjustments of the tack-tackle and the halliard, the set of the sail can indeed be altered to suit almost any wind conditions.

Europeans are often prejudiced against the dhows by the slovenly loose-ropes'-end seamanship of the modern Arab sailor. For all that, the dhows are handy, reliable and extremely seaworthy craft. They can keep the sea in almost any weather, and in a fair wind can log a steady nine or ten knots, which is faster than many steamships. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the dhows were probably the most efficient ships in the world, certainly far better designed than any contemporary ships in Western Europe. It is not surprising that when European seamen took to making long ocean voyages, they adopted in their ships many features derived from the dhows, in particular, their rig; but before following up this development we must notice one or two serious disadvantages of the lateen rig from an Atlantic point of view.

The first disadvantage is the difficulty of going about. Obviously if the sail is to draw properly, the yard must be hoisted on the lee side of the mast, and when the ship goes about, the yard must somehow be got on to the other side. At sea this can only be done by carrying the yard over the mast-head, which is a tricky and complicated manoeuvre. The Arab sailor never goes about if he can help it. When he is compelled to tack, he prefers to wear round with the wind astern, so as to take advantage of the natural lift of the sail in shifting the yard over the mast-head. In the Indian Ocean this is not a serious disadvantage, since the monsoons are regular and predictable. By choosing the right time of the monsoons the dhow-master can sail from the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf and back again without a single major alteration of course, and with the wind on the beam all the way. In the variable wind conditions of the Atlantic, however, things are not so simple, and tacking is more often necessary. Therefore, while the Arab has remained content with lateen rig to this day, the European sailor adopted lateen rig in the fifteenth century as an improvement, but was never fully satisfied with it, and eventually devised something even better to replace it. That does not, of course, detract from the debt which European shipping owed to Arab ideas.

The second disadvantage I have already mentioned—namely, the relative inefficiency of lateen rig with the wind dead astern. There is a third disadvantage which is more fundamental: the size and weight of the spars. The design of the lateen sail is such that only one sail can be carried on each mast. The sails must therefore be large ones, and very long spars are needed to carry them. The length of the main yard of a dhow is usually about the same as the overall length of a ship. It is made of two or three lengths of teak, fished together, and is naturally very heavy and awkward to handle. Hoisting the yard requires the united efforts of the whole crew, with a good deal of singing and shouting. Obviously there is a limit to the size of spar which can be handled, and this factor also limits the size of the ship. Lateen rigged ships, therefore, while efficient for their size, are necessarily small by European standards.

The Arab dhow is, and always has been, confined to the Indian Ocean, but smaller lateen types were introduced into the Eastern Mediterranean by the Muslim invaders, particularly the Turks, who during the last century of the Muslim onslaught on the Byzantine Empire achieved complete mastery of the sea in the Levant. The Portuguese, who were the most adventurous of the European sea-faring races in the fifteenth century, became familiar with these lateen types in the course of constant fighting with the North African Moors. Whatever the exact connecting links, it is certain that in the early fifteenth century, the Portuguese were using, for coasting

and exploring voyages, a vessel known as a caravel, which differed fundamentally from the square-rigged ship of the rest of Western Europe, and which betrayed its Asiatic origin in every line. Instead of castle structures, built up fore and aft, it had the low bow, the continuous sheer, and the long poop of the dhow. It had a narrower and proportionately longer hull than most European ships, and was lateen rigged throughout. This was the type of ship in which Henry the Navigator's captains made most of their voyages. Unlike its parent the dhow, however, the caravel did not remain a constant type. It developed steadily through the century as long-range exploring voyages revealed its defects.

In the first place, the difficulty of going about was overcome by shortening the yards, by setting them more nearly upright, and fitting them more snugly to the mast by means of parrals. This made it unnecessary to carry the yard over the mast-head when going about, the yard being kept always on the same side of the mast, as it is in all modern Mediterranean lateen boats. The loss of sail area caused by these changes was compensated by fitting a mizzen mast, thus giving the caravel three masts instead of (as in the case of all dhows) two.

The number of masts could not be increased indefinitely, however, and as the Portuguese captains ventured further and further from home, they began to find their caravels too small for the long voyages they had to make and the stores they had to carry. We have seen that a purely lateen rigged ship cannot be increased in size beyond a certain point without loss of efficiency, and that the Arabs never found a solution to this problem. Towards the end of the fifteenth century the ship-builders of Portugal and Spain did find a solution by combining the advantages of European square rig with those of the Asiatic lateen in one vessel. This vessel was the *caravela redonda*, the square-rigged caravel, employed in most voyages of discovery in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. It usually carried square sails on the foremast, which was rigged with course and topsail. It retained lateen rig on mainmast and mizzen. The distribution of square and lateen sails varied to some extent; sometimes there were four masts, two of which were square-rigged. The square-rigged caravel retained all the advantages of the pure lateen when sailing close hauled, and its greater spread of canvas made it much faster when running. The danger of gybing was removed, since when the wind was dead astern, the lateen sails could be furled, leaving the ship to sail under square sails alone. Since it carried a much bigger sail area in proportion to the number of masts, the ship itself could be built much bigger.

The introduction of the square-rigged caravel was an event of the first importance in the history of European shipping. Its composite rig was the parent and precursor of the rigs of all successful European ships in the centuries that followed. The combination of square and lateen sails proved so efficient that it was extended from light vessels of the caravel type to big ships, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries nearly all ships were fitted with one or more lateen sails. It was only in the eighteenth century that designers hit on the idea of breaking up the great area of the lateen sail into the much more convenient fore-and aft-sails with which we are familiar today.

The practice of fitting a mixed square and lateen rig in all classes of vessels made possible a change in the nature of exploring voyages. While the early voyages in our period were reconnaissances carried out by one or two small caravels, later

voyages were made by powerful fleets containing both ships and caravels, the two types being now able to sail in company in all weathers.

To take a few examples; the fleet with which Columbus discovered America consisted of three vessels. The flagship *Santa Maria* was a square-rigged ship with bluff bows and high castle structures fore and aft, but fitted with a lateen mizzen; the *Pinta* was a square-rigged caravel, probably of the type I have been describing. The third vessel, *Niña*, was a lateen caravel; but on the first lap of the voyage, Columbus decided that she was under-canvassed, and on putting into harbour in the Canary Islands he had her rig changed to that of a square-rigged caravel. It is clear from his journal that the Admiral disliked the *Santa Maria*, and found her too big and clumsy for dodging among the islands of the Caribbean. *Niña* under her new rig was his favourite, and he took her out to America again in subsequent expeditions. She seems to have been the kind of ship that sailors fall in love with.

In the long voyages to India big ships played a much more prominent part. Bartholomew Dias made his discovery of the Cape of Good Hope in lateen caravels; but the fleets with which Vasco da Gama and his successors followed up the discovery and reached India were big fleets comprising square-rigged caravels and ships. These fleets were intended for trade and, if necessary, conquest as well as exploration. Probably the caravels were stored from the ships, just as destroyers are stored and fuelled at sea today. The caravels also about this time—about 1500—began to be employed as escorts for the larger units. When there was fighting to be done, the caravels with their greater manoeuvrability were called upon to do it, and the naval battles of the Portuguese revealed the square-rigged caravel as by far the best fighting ship afloat, the fore-runner of the frigate. The English ships which defeated the Armada in 1588 were larger and more developed descendants of the caravels of Columbus' day, and that action remains to our own day the classic example of the superiority of fire-power and speed over mere size and weight.

This brings us to the question of armament. Sea-fighting in the later Middle Ages was chiefly a matter of laying alongside and boarding. Galleys, which were prevented by their oars from laying alongside, were sometimes fitted with rams, but it is unlikely that they ever did much damage with them. Sailing ships designed for fighting were built up fore and aft to give their boarding parties the advantage of height. This top-hamper proved so convenient for purposes of cabin accommodation that it remained a distinctive feature of most big ships, long after the original reason for it had disappeared. In the same way fighting tops or platforms were fitted near the mastheads to accommodate crossbowmen and arquebusiers. These tops also outlived their fighting purpose and later served to accommodate masthead look-outs. In the fifteenth century in all big warships the castles and fighting tops were manned by soldiers, who were carried for fighting and who were a body distinct from the sailors who worked the ship.

It is difficult to say who first introduced ship-borne artillery and when. Probably the Venetians first used it about the middle of the fourteenth century in their incessant quarrels with the Genoese. By 1400 most big European ships carried guns, small pieces mounted in the castle structures fore and aft. They were intended to supplement crossbow and musket fire in raking the enemy's upper deck. The Portuguese, the leaders of all Europe in nautical matters in the fifteenth century, seemed to have been the first people to recognize the gun and not the foot soldier as the main weapon in naval warfare, and to use guns against the enemy's ships rather than against

his men. Since their caravels had no raised castles or fighting tops, they mounted their guns along the deck firing over the gunwale. About 1500 a French marine engineer hit upon the revolutionary idea of mounting guns between decks, and piercing the ship's side with ports. At first these ports were small round holes allowing no traverse for the guns, so that all fire had to be point blank. But in the course of the sixteenth century they developed into big square ports with hinged scuttles which could be secured against the sea in bad weather, and the guns themselves were fitted with wedges for purposes of elevation and tackles for training. To the English belongs the credit of the important discovery that a gun barrel can be cast and bored in one piece, instead of being made in two halves, bound together by iron hoops. This made it possible to fit much larger guns, guns capable of sinking ships at a range of half a mile or more, so heavy that they had to be mounted on wheeled carriages, and far too heavy for the castle structures of old-fashioned ships. These heavy guns had to be mounted between decks. They were so large and so numerous that they left little room for cargo, and so the warship developed as a specialised floating battery distinct from the cargo-carrying merchant ship. The gunnery used in the great Armada battle was not, therefore, very different from that at Trafalgar. The idea in both battles was to sink the enemy's ships by firing broadsides at their hulls, instead of capturing them by boarding.

The development of broadside fire in the sixteenth century had an important effect not only on naval tactics, but also on ship construction. The mounting of large numbers of guns along the ships' side obviously increased topweight, and caused the ships' timbers to strain outwards. Builders sought to counteract these tendencies by introducing the "tumble-home" of the ships' sides, which is such a characteristic feature of wooden warships from the sixteenth century onwards. In extreme cases, especially in big Spanish ships, the width of the upper deck was only half the ship's waterline width. This device was ugly and inconvenient, but necessary. It accentuated the growing distinction in the sixteenth century between warships and merchant ships, and had a considerable effect upon naval tactics, since when two such warships lay alongside one another, their gunwales were so far apart that boarding was extremely difficult. But that is looking ahead; ships of this type took no part in the great voyages of discovery.

We know comparatively little about life on board ship in our period, but we have detailed lists of the men and the stores carried in Columbus' ships, and from them we can deduce a good deal. Enough has been said to make it clear that Spanish and Portuguese caravels were stout, handy and seaworthy. They were not the tubs or cockle-shells of popular history. They must, nevertheless, have been extremely uncomfortable. There was no provision for sleeping accommodation except the cabins for the senior officers aft. The fo'c'sle space was filled with cables and gear; there were no hammocks—these were an invention of the American Indians, thankfully adopted by European sailors. The ship's company slept on the deck or the hatch covers, as best they could, and in bad weather down below. That must have been singularly unpleasant; apart from rats and cockroaches, all wooden ships leak to some extent, and pumping out seems to have been a daily routine for the morning watchmen. In bad weather there was probably no dry space in the ship. Cooking was carried out in an open fire-box in the bows, the bottom of which was filled with sand; on the sand a wood fire was built when the weather allowed. Food consisted of the familiar salt beef and pork, beans, chick peas and ship's biscuit. Water in

cask goes foul very quickly, and in consequence large quantities of wine were carried, the normal daily allowance per man being about three pints. The idea of carrying fruit as an anti-scorbutic was then unknown, and all ship's companies on long voyages suffered more or less from scurvy. It was no uncommon thing to lose two-thirds of a ship's company on a long voyage. Columbus was fortunate. Magellan sailed with two hundred men of whom twenty-five survived.

Columbus' fleet on the first voyage carried ninety men, of whom perhaps forty sailed in the *Santa Maria*. Considering that she was not much bigger than a Brixham trawler, this was overcrowding by modern standards. But since she carried no soldiers, she was much less overcrowded than the warships of the time. The ship's company seemed to have worked in two watches, the hours of the watches being much the same as now. The master and the pilot were the two officers in charge of the two watches. It must be remembered that ships often carried a sailing-master who worked the ship, and a pilot who navigated her, as well as the captain who commanded her. The captain was not necessarily a professional seaman; in a man-of-war he was more often a soldier. It was only with the development of naval gunnery that soldiers were ousted from sea-going command in regular men-of-war. Sailors, before that time, were a disreputable lot, prone to piracy, socially little regarded, and in general unsuited for responsible command.

The needs of exploration and sea-borne expansion, however, made clear the necessity of a body of fighting seamen, who were not just soldiers or merchants afloat, nor just handlers of ships, but something of all three. In exploring, as in fighting, it was not only the ships which counted, it was the men in them; and in the crowded conditions of small ships on long voyages there was no room for differences of function based on landmen's ideas. When Drake proclaimed that gentlemen who went to sea with him must learn to become sailors—"I must have the gentleman to hale and draw with the mariner"—he was announcing the birth of a new and honourable profession, a profession possessing not only high traditions of courage and discipline, but also a great body of accurate knowledge and specialised skill. Voyaging to the Indies or the Golden Chersonese indeed ennobled what had been a somewhat disreputable calling, as Drake's *Queen* showed when she knighted him on the quarter-deck of his own flagship. It was the failure to make this important social change, as much as the failure to keep pace with the development of ship design, which brought about the decline of Spanish and Portuguese maritime power in the late sixteenth century. It was the ability to make the change which, in part at least, made possible the spectacular rise of the sea power of the English and the Dutch.

Notes on the Reading of Poetry

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I

'When I use a word', Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less'.

'The question is', said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different things'.

'The question is', said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master—that's all'.

But of course in actual fact the writer has to compromise. He cannot allow himself the arbitrary power claimed by Humpty Dumpty—for whom the word 'glory' could be made to mean 'there's a nice knock-down argument for you'. There is an amusing passage on the impossibility of thrusting an arbitrary meaning on a word in Aldous Huxley's early novel, *Crome Yellow*. Dennis, the 'hero', is enamoured of the word 'carminative', which he feels ought to have poetic and passionate associations. He even uses the word in a poem and speaks of 'passion carminative as wine'. Then he looks the word up in a dictionary and finds to his dismay that it is to be associated not with passion and poetry, but with gripe-water. The writer's mastery is in fact not shown in Humpty Dumpty's way; he does not work by imposing arbitrary meanings on single words or even phrases; what he does is to organise words and phrases into fresh contexts, the freshness depending not on the individual word or phrase but on the context which selects a particular set of associations for the individual word or phrase. The poetry is in the pattern. And the reader's task is to ensure that he perceives the whole meaning, that he is not interpreting or judging on a partial reading. This will no doubt seem obvious—but most failures in reading are failures to elucidate the whole meaning which the writer is trying to communicate. Put otherwise, they are failures of critical submission.

Let us first look at a few examples where the context is clearly ignored. The crudest kind of misreading—perhaps 'misuse' is here the better word—is that in which a phrase is completely isolated from its context and given a meaning quite alien to that originally intended. A good example is the phrase—'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin'—which in what might be called its desk-calendar meaning speaks to all our hearts of the simple, kindly, universal emotions—the appeal of the puppy that begs with pathetic earnestness. The phrase belongs in popular usage to an Ella-Wheeler-Wilcox context: pleasantly sentimental. But the original context is something far different: the phrase comes from that extremely

bitter play of Shakespeare's, *Troilus and Cressida*, a play concerned with the inevitable corrupting and obliterating power of time :

*For beauty, wit,
High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
To envious and calumniating time.
One touch of nature makes the whole world kin,
That all with one consent praise new-born gawds,
Though they are made and moulded of things past,
And give to dust that is a little gilt
More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.*

Shakespeare is frequently the victim of this sort of thing. Only one degree less deplorable is the isolation of a passage (say the pessimistic speech of Macbeth's about the futility of life—'And all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death')—and the saddling of Shakespeare himself with the 'philosophy' of the passage. The objection to such isolation and distortion is primarily that it sentimentalizes the original meaning—and as a habit it militates against the discipline of serious reading. Perhaps it would be fanciful to see more sinister implications of the habit of mind involved, but one is reminded of another—more celebrated—misuse of a Shakespeare quotation: Neville Chamberlain, at the time of the Munich crisis in 1938, asserted that 'out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety'. 1 Henry IV, Act 2, Scene 3. But an important part of the theme of the play is to call in question rash political activity—and Hotspur, who utters the phrase, is certainly presented in something of a satirical light. He is commenting on a letter from a fellow-rebel who is getting cold feet and who writes (and proves a true prophet):

*'The purpose you undertake is dangerous; the friends you have named
uncertain; the time itself unsorted; and your whole plot too light for the
counterpoise of so great an opposition'.*

Not a very happy context. It is indeed risky—to say no more—to take our culture from the desk-calendar.

This might be termed 'snippet-reading'; more serious, because it appears in serious criticism, is that kind of partial reading which takes some quality actually present but fails to see its whole significance. That very great poet, the late W. B. Yeats, for instance, in the introduction to his *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, quotes four lines from Eliot's *The Waste Land*:

*When lovely woman stoops to folly and
Paces about her room again, alone,
She smooths her hair with automatic hand,
And puts a record on the gramophone.*

There is obviously an echo (in a more sordid modern setting) of Goldsmith's lines; but this is not the point here. Yeats complains of the mechanical rhythm of these

lines. Well, of course, the rhythm is mechanical—so is the emotion (or lack of emotion) being presented. Clearly enough the rhythm must be related to the whole context of that section of the poem—indeed to the whole poem, with its theme of the drying up of spontaneity, the emotional aridity of modern life. Yeats isolates one aspect without considering its dramatic relevance.

One final example of misreading. This is a particularly interesting specimen because it shows the reader fully aware of the real contextual meaning of the passage but *determined* to give it a totally different meaning¹. A. E. Housman (a classical scholar with a venomous tongue for the inadequacies of his predecessors) in his lecture on *The Name and Nature of Poetry* is concerned with exalting that kind of poetry which can be called 'poetry neat', poetry 'with so little meaning that nothing except poetic emotion is perceived or matters'. Just as Yeats implies that rhythm can be judged as a thing in itself, so Housman speaks of 'poetic emotion' as a distinct thing which can exist in a void divorced from 'meaning', that is to say, intellectual content. And as an example of neat poetry Housman quotes a line from Milton. It comes in a pastoral entertainment called *Arcades*:

Nymphs and shepherds, dance no more

'What is it', Housman asks, 'what is it that can draw tears, as I know it can, to the eyes of more readers than one? What in the world is there to cry about? Why have the mere words the physical effect of pathos I can only say, because they are poetry, and find their way to something in man which is obscure and latent, something older than the present organization of his nature' This might indeed be termed submission on the part of the reader—but it is not submission to Milton. What Housman has done when reading the line is to allow his mind to dwell on all the associations of the phrase 'no more'—associations of past joys seen in the light of the joyless present and the joyless future. He finds in the line a deep nostalgic pathos. But in doing so he is guilty of a kind of reading which—in his other personality of classical scholar—he would have mercilessly condemned. *Arcades* was part of an entertainment given at Harefield in Middlesex for the Dowager Countess of Derby; and in fact the nymphs and shepherds are not being implored to stop dancing—but to transfer their dancing from Arcadia to seventeenth-century England:

*Nymphs and Shepherds, dance no more
By sandy Ladons Lillied banks
Though Erymanth your loss deplore,
A better soyl shall give ye thanks.
From the stony Maenalus,
Bring your Flocks, and live with us,
Here ye shall have greater grace,
To serve the Lady of this place*

that is, the Countess of Derby. What Housman has done is simple enough. He has taken Milton's line out of its context and given it a quite opposite meaning to that

(1) The example which follows is a familiar one, but no critic has pointed out that Housman's misreading seems to be *deliberate*.

intended. From his point of view this is permissible. If 'meaning' is a separate thing from emotion—and so inferior a thing, then the reader is at liberty to weave his own private fantasies. After all, it was Housman who maintained that 'Malt does more than Milton can To justify God's ways to Man'! And that Housman knows what he is doing is clear: the phrase quoted above, 'Why have the mere words the physical effect of pathos', actually continues, 'when the sense of the passage is blithe and gay'. Housman is in fact determined to impose his private emotion on the isolated line. He is creating a private poem independent of Milton's. This may be considered a harmless activity—but it cannot be called in any serious sense, the reading of poetry.

In all these examples, then, there is a clear failure in reading—a failure to grapple with the whole meaning that the writer has to offer. Crude examples, no doubt—but they do show what in more subtle ways we are all prone to do in reading. We do tend to see what we want to see; we simplify, isolate, distort—according to pre-conceived (and mostly unconscious) notions about what the writer ought to be doing. The motive may vary. We may be a politician hastily looking round for what we hope is an apt quotation—or we may be a literary critic with too limited a conception of the nature of poetry. The result will in each case be a misreading, a failure of communication. It requires a difficult effort in objectivity to read a poem. And notice how blurred and generalized Housman's comments are: the poet who is worth serious consideration is never presenting blurred, generalized, stock emotions of this kind. And the reader must be alert for the precise freshness of the individual, unique, poem.

II

But here it is necessary to emphasize once more that *arbitrary* freshness is not in question. And the reader who aims at more than superficiality must concern himself not only with the unique qualities of a particular poem: the 'context' of a poem may include much that the poem has in common with other contemporary poetry or it may include references 'external' to the poem which need to be perceived for the full understanding of the poem.

What are some of the forms this background knowledge may take? At the trivial end of the scale a reader must be aware of the possibility that a word has changed its meaning, or has changed its tone. If an eighteenth-century poet speaks of a 'gale' he generally means not a storm, but a gentle breeze. Even Wordsworth, who disliked so much of eighteenth-century language, could speak of 'gales that breathe too gently to recall Aught of the fading year's inclemency'. There the possibility of misunderstanding is faint; but it would puzzle a modern reader unfamiliar with eighteenth-century usage to come across such a phrase as that of Thomson's (the Thomson who wrote *Rule Britannia*): 'Every gale is peace, and every grove is melody'. When we tackle an earlier writer—say Chaucer—we have of course constantly to be on our guard. The difficulty does not arise with words which have passed right out of the language: if we see the word 'sweven' we have to look it up in the glossary before we know it means 'a dream'; but if we come across the phrase 'as craft counterfeiteth kind' we might incautiously assume it meant 'as the crafty man pretends to be kind'—whereas it really means 'as art imitates nature'. Chaucer's words have survived, but the meanings have changed drastically. And if

this need for caution is greater the earlier the writer it is still important with quite modern writers: 'gale' is a simple example; or consider Pope's couplet in *The Rape of the Lock* describing the contemporary Beauties:

*With varying Vanities, from ev'ry Part,
They shift the moving Toyshop of their Heart.*

'Toyshop' took its present meaning at the beginning of the nineteenth-century: for Pope it was a shop selling ribbons and trinkets—an appropriate symbol for the vain eighteenth-century women he has in mind. Not to recognize the contemporary meaning here is to lose most of the force of the couplet.

Words change their meaning; they also change their tone. Dryden could write without any risk:

*The lovely Thais, by his side,
Sate like a blooming eastern bride.*

Dryden could not know that the word 'blooming' would degenerate. On the other hand the seventeenth-century poet Vaughan should have been more careful than to assert 'how brave a prospect is a bright backside'—referring to the slope of a hill: the less fortunate associations of that last word go back to 1500 (Vaughan's nineteenth-century editor judiciously, if inaccurately, changed the phrase to 'traversed plain'). A less frivolous example of a shift in tone is given by the word 'enthusiasm'—which once connoted 'fanaticism'—as in the wholly laudatory eighteenth-century epitaph, 'Pious without Enthusiasm'.

In all these cases good reading involves historical knowledge, or at any rate a readiness to look up the Oxford Dictionary on the slightest provocation. It will also be fairly clear that much poetry presupposes historical knowledge in the ordinary sense. A Burns lyric may be understood without reference to the political history of Scotland in the second half of the eighteenth-century. But a satire of Alexander Pope's can be almost meaningless without some footnote information. Consider for example the opening lines of the *Epistle to Augustus*:

*While You, great Patron of Mankind, sustain
The balanc'd World, and open all the Main;
Your Country, chief, in Arms abroad defend,
At home, with Morals, Arts, and Laws amend;
How shall the Muse, from such a Monarch, steal
An hour, and not defraud the Publick Weal?*

How far would this be intelligible if one did not know something of contemporary politics and the reputation of George II?—the fact that George was notoriously uninterested in the Arts, that Walpole's peace policy was thought to have prevented England from taking her full share in foreign affairs, that the reference to the 'opening of the Main' is an ironical glance at the many attacks at that time on English ships, and that the reference to George's defence of his country 'in Arms abroad' has in mind not military exploits but Hanoverian mistresses . . . This is an extreme case of course—but it would be easy to find many other examples where some measure of historical knowledge is necessary to a full understanding of a poem.

The question of biographical knowledge raises many problems—how far should we invoke the author's biography for our interpretation of his work? Obviously there can be no simple rule. I will merely cite one example where an awareness of the particular point in the author's life when a poem was written helps considerably in the understanding of the poem. Milton wrote his poem *Lycidas*¹ at the end of 1637. It is ostensibly an elegy on the death of Edward King, a Cambridge friend of Milton's. Dr. Johnson judged it as such—and condemned it as insincere: 'In this poem there is no nature, for there is no truth . . . Its form is that of a pastoral, easy, vulgar, and therefore disgusting'. And as for the meaning—'the true meaning', says Johnson, 'is so uncertain and remote that it is never sought, because it cannot be known when it is found'. But the true meaning of the poem is not so obscure when it is fitted into the larger context of Milton's life. To do this convincingly would take some detailed exposition: the main point is that after a period of certainty about his vocation in life—the vocation of a self-dedicated poet—Milton by the end of his five years of arduous preparatory study is not unnaturally assailed with doubts. The relevance of Edward King is that he too was a virtuous young man also devoted to learning and poetry—and he had been cut off in his youth. Milton is moved to consider his own past, present and future in relation to the divine will. What is the point of striving if Death can intervene before anything is achieved? The poem works out Milton's own progress through doubts and misgivings (the passage about the corrupt clergy who flourish while such as Edward King die, represents Milton's strong sense of the wrongness of things) to an acceptance of divine will; the end is renewed faith and vigour: Tomorrow to fresh Woods, and Pastures new. The meaning of the poem is fully to be seen only in relation to our knowledge of Milton's personality and his mental progress. Dr. Johnson's complaints about the pastoral convention, incidentally, show the danger of judging by labels—*Lycidas* is an elegy; the job of an elegy is to lament the death of somebody loved by the poet; its success is to be judged by the sincerity of this grief: the pastoral convention precludes sincerity; therefore the poem fails. But the reader must not judge in this superficial way: he must be prepared to find a deeper meaning for which the outer convention may be something of a disguise—or, perhaps, a method of controlling the personal emotion.

Changes in meaning, changes in tone—the reader, then, must keep his mind open for such things; and he must be prepared to seek relevant historical or biographical knowledge; and he must be prepared to seek a meaning not obviously on the surface or restricted to the convention employed (although recognition of the convention itself must obviously be present).

Of course there may be cases where the need for external knowledge becomes so great that we are very near to Humpty Dumpty's use of language. In *Lycidas* a private emotion is projected into a convention; the extreme of this is reached when the convention becomes private symbolism as in the poetry of Blake. Blake uses symbols quite arbitrarily. The popular hymn *Jerusalem*, for instance, did not mean for Blake at all what it means to those thousands nowadays who sing it to Parry's rousing music. 'Jerusalem' itself is for Blake a symbol of sexual liberty. And the famous phrase 'these dark Satanic Mills' does not refer to the Industrial Revolution

(1) For a more detailed exposition of the poem from this point of view see E. M. W. Tillyard, *Poetry Direct & Oblique* (1945), pp. 81-84.

but to the altars of the organized churches which Blake so much detested. Even the *Songs of Innocence and Experience* need a study of Blake's symbolism to be properly understood.

The opposite consideration which a reader might have to allow for is the use by the poet of a whole attitude to the cosmos which would be accepted without question by his contemporaries but which has lost much of its force for us. The most important example of this is that complicated but beautifully patterned world-picture of hierarchies, revolving spheres, parallel planes of existence which dominated the Middle Ages, and still had immense significance in Elizabethan England. It is the concept of Order set out by Ulysses in his famous speech in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*:

*The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre,
Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office, and custom, in all line of order . . .*

This concept, which has received much critical attention of recent years, is present throughout Spenser's poems and Shakespeare's plays, and indeed most Elizabethan literature. It is important for us to realize the force it had for the Elizabethans—most important when it is presented negatively—when the possibility of the overthrowing of Order strikes the appalled Elizabethan mind. The remainder of Ulysses' speech shows this possibility. And, to take a simpler example, when Othello cries 'Chaos is come again' the significance for him is not merely personal—his despair has behind it a sense of vast universal order which seems overthrown. The opposition of Order and Disorder forms indeed the basic theme of many of Shakespeare's plays—and we must be aware of this in cosmic terms if we are not to restrict the meaning of the plays. The fear of chaos is the greater because of the vast Order which is in peril: disturb one single element in the Order and the whole cosmos is threatened. The feeling is still present in large measure in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. But by Milton's time the modern scientific, departmentalized world (in which we live) was well advanced, and the metaphysical, unified world of the Middle Ages was gone for ever. Now it requires a conscious effort to think ourselves back into the emotional implications of such a world-picture.

III

'Context', then, must frequently be taken in a wide sense, if our understanding of the poem is to be at all adequate. But we must always return to the individual poem. Let us in conclusion examine the ways in which a poet can handle words to achieve that freshness of effect which is of the essence of good poetry. And incidentally some aspects of the kind of detailed critical attention a reader should try to cultivate will, it is hoped, be revealed.

To begin with Shakespeare. As good a way as any of observing how Shakespeare achieves freshness is to compare a passage of his poetry with the source from which it is taken. For instance the play *Anthony and Cleopatra* is in places based on North's translation of Plutarch. Even the most famous passage in the play, the description of Cleopatra sailing in her barge to meet Anthony, is very closely based

on North. But Shakespeare succeeds in giving the description a sense of immediacy and physical impact which is lacking in North. He does it by very slight alterations, but they are enough. The first few lines in Shakespeare run:

*The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne,
Burn'd on the water; the poop was beaten gold,
Purple the sails, and so perfumed, that
The winds were love-sick with them, the oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes.*

Now the material objects in North are much the same: the poop of gold, the purple sails, the silver oars which keep in time with the music; but whereas in North these objects are merely presented in descriptive progression, in Shakespeare they become vivid images which re-enact the scene rather than merely describe it. This is North:

*. . . . she disdained to set forth otherwise, but to take her barge in the river
of Cydnus, the poope whereof was of gold, the sailes of purple, and the
owers of silver, which kept stroke in rowing after the sounde of the musicke
of flutes, howboyes, citherns, violles, and such other instruments as they
played upon in the barge.*

What are Shakespeare's alterations? His barge 'burn'd' on the water: the word alliterates with 'barge' and 'burnish'd' and links the three notions so that having accepted the glow of the *burnishing* we also accept the more imaginative *burning* of the barge: 'the barge . . . like a burnish'd throne Burn'd on the water'. The poop is given solidity by the adjective 'beaten'—the 'poop was *beaten* gold'—the continuing alliteration gives additional emphasis. Shakespeare inverts North's 'the sailes of purple' and writes 'Purple the sails'—thrusting the colour on our attention; and, in keeping with the erotic power of Cleopatra (it is to evoke this that the whole speech is inserted at this point in the play) he adds the image of the love-sick winds—the sails were 'so perfumed that The winds were love-sick with them'. Similarly he personifies the water in the lines which follow, and at the same time he achieves a kind of imitative fluid movement—'the oars . . . made The water which they beat to follow faster'. He also gains an imitative effect (all these effects are lacking in North) in the phrase presenting the oars which 'to the tune of flutes kept stroke'—the three successive stresses give something of the rhythmic beating of the oars on the water. And Shakespeare condenses North's catalogue of musical instruments (flutes, howboyes, citherns, violles) and the vague phrase 'such other instruments as they played upon in the barge' to 'the tune of flutes'. Even in the small change of North's 'river' to Shakespeare's 'water' there is a change from the merely descriptive to the more actual: the contrast of water and burning has a sharply physical effect And so one can go through the whole of the speech and see how Shakespeare turns the pleasant but rather remote narrative of North into highly imaginative and vivid poetry, evoking the sensuous physical presence of Cleopatra and making that a vital part of the play.

But even more interesting, and impressive, is Shakespeare's power to present *abstract* ideas without losing this vivid sense of immediacy. His mind has an extraordinary power of giving physical content to abstract language. The habit of his mind can be seen in such a short passage as this from *Macbeth*¹ :

*There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.*

A phrase like 'the mind's construction' by itself remains largely abstract—something of a dead metaphor. But the juxtaposition with the phrase 'on whom I built', without any kind of disturbingly obvious notion of physical building, nevertheless gives to the dead metaphor of 'construction' a fresh life: 'the mind's construction' becomes something more tangible. This power of taking the general, the vague, the abstract and giving them concrete realization can be well illustrated by another extract from this same play of *Macbeth*, the familiar passage already referred to:

*All our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.*

This is a passage of remarkably fluid imagery—indeed one might think at first that the flow was perhaps almost uncontrolled. But this is not so—the imagery is most carefully controlled to express the underlying thought. This thought is one of the main themes of the play: life is a formless thing of deceitful appearance. Of course this idea of deceit and futility is finally overthrown by the end of the play; but it receives its strongest expression in this speech of Macbeth's just before the forces of order overcome it. An abstract notion; yet Shakespeare manages to express it without abandoning the normal concrete world. He starts with the notion of a footman conducting a stupidly complacent guest to bed: 'all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death'. The use of 'dusty' with its concrete suggestion of dryness, something trodden on, gives physical effect to the otherwise abstract word 'death' Life as a footman; then life as a candle, the candle which is blown out before sleep—'Out, out, brief candle'. Then life as the shadow cast by the candle—something less tangible than the candle. Then the walking shadow (perhaps with the suggestion of Plato's cave where life is merely a succession of shadows of things which man never really sees), the walking shadow of somebody else's brain. Without abandoning concrete reference Shakespeare is giving a cumulative effect to the abstract idea of the futility of life. And having progressed to the image of the living man as a mere puppet who vanishes, he clinches the matter by making

(1). This example was first suggested some years ago in a lecture by Dr. F. R. Leavis at Cambridge.

the controlling agent a mere idiot—'a tale Told by an idiot', and a tale signifying *nothing*. Thus the abstract idea is developed almost entirely in terms of concrete phenomena. And the thought cannot really be separated from the expression.

It will be clear from these brief analyses how remarkable was Shakespeare's capacity to control the associations of his language and to avoid that vagueness which is the death of poetry. It should also be clear how the context, the whole meaning of the passage, decides the precise meaning, the emotional significance, of individual words and phrases. In fact the two things, individual words and phrases on the one hand and the whole meaning on the other—the context—are completely interdependent. There is nothing remarkable about the bits and pieces out of which Macbeth's speech is constructed; but arranged in that way they become memorable poetry.

This power of charging the local word or phrase with a significance gained from its context is not of course confined to Shakespeare, though his work gives the most remarkable instances of it.

Nor indeed need the reference be purely to the normal concrete world. Consider the following example: in Mr. T. S. Eliot's poem "Ash Wednesday" he wishes to present at one point a state of positive religious exaltation in which all negative aspects of life, especially the complete negation, Death, are merged into the radiance of mystic vision:

*And the bones sang chirping
With the burden of the grasshopper*

Here the controlling word is 'chirping' with its normal associations of innocent gaiety. But the second line is an echo from that most depressing book of the Bible, Ecclesiastes, Chapter 12, verse 5:

*Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be
in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be
a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the
mourners go about the streets.*

Eliot has changed the suggestion of the word 'burden' from that of weight, weariness, oppression, to that of song and lightness—the effect being all the greater because of the transformation, because of our awareness of the contrast. Even if the reader does not recognize the allusion the force of the passage is not lost, 'chirping' controlling the mood (together with the suggestions of the whole section of the poem, of course); but an awareness of what is going on greatly enriches the passage.

As a final example to show how poetic control can charge language with a surprising freshness of significance, consider the following short poem of Wordsworth:

*A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seem'd a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.*

*No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Roll'd round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks, and stones, and trees.*

That is a very great poem and it will bear much detailed analysis, but it is quoted here for the sake of one word, the word 'thing' in the first stanza:

*She seem'd a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.*

At first sight this seems an extraordinarily poor word to use, so vague as to be almost meaningless. Yet when we relate it to its context it is seen to have a remarkable aptness. What, briefly, is the thought of the poem? In the first stanza the poet speaks of a time in the past when his love made him blind to the invariable human lot. The girl whom he loved seemed immortal, immortal in this normal human world—she would never grow old and die. In the second stanza the girl has died and has been absorbed into the non-human world of rocks and stones and trees. She has in fact achieved an immortality—but it is not the immortality that the poet had in mind in the first stanza: it is a non-sentient immortality, the immortality of things as opposed to living humanity—now she neither hears nor sees. She has in fact become a thing. Thus the use of the word 'thing' in the first stanza is seen, in the light of the whole poem, to be an ironic comment on the poet's blindness at that time in the past. No other word would serve in the context.

This is one of the best examples possible to illustrate the power of the context to impose significance upon the single word. It shows the vital importance of not isolating words for judgment, it shows the true mastery of the great poet over words, it shows the detailed critical attention which is necessary for the full understanding of poetry—and it demonstrates most convincingly the truth of the assertion made at the beginning of these notes: the poetry is in the pattern.

Reviews

THREE MERIDIANS—Geoffrey Drayton (Toronto, Ryerson Press, 1950-51)

GEOFFREY DRAYTON is the son of a Barbadian sugar-planter. He graduated at Cambridge and is now a master at Ashbury College, Ottawa. This pamphlet, one of the Ryerson poetry chap-books, contains thirteen short poems, many of which have already appeared in the West Indian magazine *Bim*, or have been broadcast by the B.B.C.

The dominant note of the poems is that of exile, of nostalgia for the sights and sounds of boyhood. The dominant images are those which, in many West Indian poets and painters, epitomise the Caribbean—images of heat and flame, of vivid colouring, of blood, bright flowers and the sun. Are these images all a true reflection in the seeing eye of the poet? Or are they a half-conscious convention of revolt against the present conventional greys and sombre shades of the artists of temperate latitudes? The latter is to a certain extent true of the South African poet, Roy Campbell, whose violent colours and violent actions are part of a violent reaction against the tepid quality he finds in the work of his English contemporaries; a reaction also from over-subtlety to over-simplification.

Mr. Drayton's dreams of his home are drenched with sunshine, they have the lyrical qualities of the travel posters, yet he himself half-formulates the question which occurs to the reader: "What other aspects of West Indian life might strike him more forcibly if he returned?"

At the rise of the summer I shall go
back;
And I shall know again
The places that my dreams keep
fresh—
The faces wreathed in green shadows,
Where the flowers flame and bleed in
the dark—
The frangipani, harlot-scented.
And scarlet hibiscus, drunk with
sun
But the faces, the faces . . .
Will they be warm to touch,
And groping fingers find a grasp
Sincere in welcome as goodbye?"

He himself is aware of the dangers of seeing and accepting with an unseeing eye, of translating immediately all he sees into conventional imagery. In *Letter from the Gati-neau* he says:

. . . I sometimes think we look too
often
And familiarly at nature's archi-
tecture
Dismissing as a tree
What, growing downwards from a
porcelain sky,
Would gain particularity of shape
and hue.

There are occasional apparent confusions of thought, as in the second and third stanzas of the opening poem, *To the Poets of the Caribbean*, where the third stanza, forcibly recalling the second by similarities of reference, appears to contradict the advice it gives:

"Beware those lips hibiscus-stained
With blood of her too-potent love;
Fevered their touch, like desert suns,
Yet thirsting where their lips make
drought.

(In this first stanza also, the recurrence of *their* in the fourth line is confusing, since its subject, the *desert suns*, is different from that of *their* in the third line, the lips.)

No less her priesthood than her love
Forswear. The moon of madness has
Set seal upon her acolyte,
And lippled his words with idiot
froth.
Approach as to a throne, bend knee,
Pay hooded compliment, perhaps
Receive, in token of caprice,
A flower, gaudily inscribed.

In general the poems are refreshing, descriptive of sights, sounds and emotions. The poet has considerable ability as a draughtsman in what is primarily a painter's mode of expression; his feeling for outline and rhythm is good. The fact that most of the poems remain pleasant trifles, well-sketched, well-executed, perhaps indicates Mr. Drayton's limitations.

R. B. LE PAGE

L'OUBLI—Poems by E. McG. Keane, of St. Vincent. Privately published.

THESE POEMS draw inspiration from a deep love of, but rather nebulous faith in, the West Indies, and they voice the author's hopes and fears and his response to the West Indian scene, as well as what appears to be his own profound personal pessimism, which is perhaps a mirror of the pessimism of the times.

It is a pity that the poems as a whole do not live up to the promise of the dedication:

You of the green,
Of the river,
Of the born dream
Of faith
Of many bloods,
In your sick latitudes
I have buried my soul; . . .
that when your dream
is morning
and your night of bloods
breaks into word,
I who drank dumb
the once darkness of your hot vision
may be undimmed to bleed
a spark;
bright to sing as rivers my faith in
your green sprung soul

Even here is an example of what seems to be the poet's greatest fault of expression—his use of imagery that is confused and unevocative alongside that which is apt and gives increased depth to the expression. The second stanza above carries on in *darkness of your hot vision* the idea of its first lines—the dawn coming and the unexpressed dream of the night breaking into song in the poet's mouth; but the images of light and blood and drinking are then mingled in a way that leaves a confused response in the reader; e.g. *undimmed to bleed a spark*.

Forgetting—the title theme—is one on which the poet plays many variations. The moment is all that matters; death is a forgetting, and remembering is death;

We thrive upon forgetting, fresh
Dreams our breath. For the poor
rash

Soul that dares remember, dies,

But after death:

. . . supposing all
that is of me pupa-prison
burst
would I
caterpillar
know myself in wings? . . .

The poet appears to wish to bury the past, to have faith only in the future; yet it is a future, not of fulfilment of the dreams but only of repeated transient dreams. This seems to me a form of literary opium-eating that must be subject to a Law of Diminishing Returns, when finally the only thing to dream about is dreaming.

The poems are made unnecessarily obscure by typographical gymnastics presumably dictated by the author. If the appeal of a poem is to the ear, even to the silent ear of the mind, the only purpose in breaking it down on the printed page is to help the reader to apprehend more easily the rhythm and imagery. Some 17th century poets felt that the pattern of a poem in print could underline its imagery. If this is Mr. Keane's aim he has succeeded, for rhythm, print and imagery are sometimes equally disjointed. Where he forgets such intellectual caprices, he writes with true rhythm and feeling. That is why, paradoxically, the best poems in this book are those springing from contemplation of some memorable moment.—*The Palm, and Calypso Dancers*.

R. B. LE PAGE

GEOLOGY—AN INTRODUCTION TO EARTH HISTORY—H. H. Read.

Home University Library, No. 198.

HERE is a book that can be unhesitatingly recommended to the reader interested in natural science. Written with clarity and infectious enthusiasm it is an excellent introduction to the science of geology.

Anyone attempting to write an introduction to geology is immediately confronted

by the great diversity of the subject, and it would be manifestly impossible to deal adequately with the whole in a short book. Much has necessarily to be sacrificed and Professor Read has rightly chosen to deal with geology as the study of earth history, for this is really the ultimate aim of the

science, the goal towards which all the highly specialized lines of investigation lead, namely to an understanding of the processes, mode of formation and sequence of events which have gone to make up the crust of the earth.

A history, if it is to be something more than a collection of facts and dates, must be knit together by a philosophical method; the early part of the book is therefore devoted to the establishment of the working philosophy, then with the key thus wrought Professor Read goes on to show how the secrets of the rocks are revealed and the story pieced together.

The book is admirable for its very clear exposition of a great variety of phenomena

and above all for relating all these to the central theme. In one instance only does Professor Read allow his personal enthusiasm to tempt him into the byways of controversy, and that is on the subject of granitization. It would be quite impossible to discuss all the issues involved in so short a space, and therefore a broader treatment would have been advantageous. But among so much that is excellent this digression can readily be forgiven.

Altogether a fine achievement, for this book both provides a wealth of information and insight relating to geological thought for the layman, and a stimulus to the initiated.

K. W. BARR

A Letter to the Editor

Sir,

I should like to raise the question of the pronunciation of a word in which you, Sir, should be deeply interested since it is a key word in your title. I was brought up to say Caribbbean and shall continue to pronounce the word in that fashion. In this I am supported by the Oxford English Dictionary which does not even mention any alternative, although with words legitimately pronounced in different ways it is not sparing in giving the various pronunciations. The word is clearly derived from the Caribbees and the proper pronunciation preserves the derivation. During the last few years the erroneous pronunciation Caribbean seems to be spreading, which is a pity, and the point which I wish to raise is whether any of your readers of long life and good memory can throw light on the date when this error began. For myself

I suspect that the military with their known genius for inventing new pronunciations may be involved.

While on the point of pronunciations, I should like further to protest against the word economics being pronounced *economics* instead of *oeconomics* and against the similar error in related words. The root of all these is the Greek for a house which came into English through the Latin form *oeconomicus*. The first vowel must clearly be long as it has been for several hundred years. In French the word is *économique* which again shows the vowel length and no pronunciation with the initial vowel short is even mentioned in the Oxford Dictionary.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

T. W. J. TAYLOR.

Designed and printed at the Government Printing Office, Trinidad, B.W.I.





